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ABSTRACT

This book is the second in a two-volume series of studies of educational change organized around three themes--systemic change, the transformation of policy into practice, and curriculum contexts. The book presents case studies from Australia, Great Britain, Israel, the United States, and New Zealand to illustrate the cross-cultural complexity of the contexts in which educational change occurs. The contributors document government attempts to reform education through legislation and to change curriculum by linking education with national productivity. With a few exceptions, common features of the cases include the marginalization of professional educators, the corporatization of education systems, the instrumentalization of curriculum, and a disregard of educational research conducted over the last 30 years. The chapters in section 1 illustrate structural and organizational change at the national and/or system level: (1) "Devolution of School Governance in an Australian State School System: Third Time Lucky?" (Max Angus); (2) "Radical Legislated School Reform in the United States: An Examination of Chicago and Kentucky" (Betty E. Steffy and Fenwick W. English); (3) "Texas Educational Reform: Why? Why Not? Who? What? and So What?" (Sandra Neubert); and (4) "The Shift to School-Based Management in New Zealand--The School View" (Cathy Wylie). Section 2 examines the way in which policies are mediated into everyday practice. Chapters include: (5) "Educational Reform in Israel: An Example of Synergy in Education" (Miriam Ben-Peretz); (6) "Evolution of Intentions: From State Policy Development to Teacher Implementation" (Jim Lowham); and (7) "Principal Influences on National Policy Implementation in Selected Australian and New Zealand Catholic Schools" (Patricia Walsh and David Carter). Chapters in the third section describe competing ideological positions concerning the implementation of curriculum change: (8) "Culture and Economic Change: The New Zealand School Curriculum" (Roger Peddie); (9) "Shifting Negotiations: A Case Study of Lower Secondary School English Syllabuses in Western Australia" (Marnie O'Neill); and (10) "Teachers' Early Experiences of the Implementation of the British National Curriculum" (Neville Bennett and Clive Carre). Each section contains a brief introductory summary of the chapters. (Contains 285 references.) (LMI)

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Case Studies in Educational Change

Case Studies in Educational Change:
An International Perspective

Editors

David S. G. Carter and Marnie H. O'Neill

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Preface

The inspiration for this work, presented as a two volume companion set, was derived initially from a period of study leave in 1985 and again in 1990 involving protracted periods of residence in the USA and UK through which we developed close involvement at many levels with academics, administrators and schools people in different education systems. Contacts made then have been maintained and strengthened, and, for both of us, as we compared notes and experiences from attending a number of national, regional and international conferences, it became evident that these educators appeared to be saying essentially similar things about the implementation of change — policies, programmes and practices — seemingly driven by external forces which had taken over the agenda from the profession. Somewhere in all this ferment was the exercise of the political will to govern in a directly interventionist fashion in education.

It was intriguing to witness, as we moved around the world, gubernatorial elections being run on essentially education platforms, especially after the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in the US, and the direct involvement of the Thatcher Government in developing and imposing a national curriculum in Britain, with the education portfolio becoming one of the hottest in Cabinet. A similar phenomenon occurred in New Zealand, with parallels in Australia, where numerous inquiries into education across the States and Territories followed by radical revisions to curricula and organization took place throughout the 1980s continuing to the present. Those who believed in the domino theory, as this applied to education in Western society, could have had a 'field day'. There appeared to be a set of forces at work which could only be worked out through the radical reform, restructuring, and/or transformation of education systems at all levels, although the work of schools was singled out for particular attention. The latter was motivated by a general dissatisfaction with the deficiencies in the perceived performance of schools and their failure to deliver value for money in terms of the dollar spent; the need to align schools more closely with economic reforms; and a view, prevalent at the time, of education in terms of human capital. In all the countries mentioned above, we were very aware that there was a common conception, at least by those outside education (and some within it), that the transformation of schools and the reform of school systems would enable each country

concerned to recapture its rightful share of the global market place. It seemed rather bizarre to us that education, with its underlying moral imperative, was to be a major player for the exercise of market forces in realizing socio-economic goals in which the 'size of the global cake' was fixed.

In Volume 1, a number of educators and academics, selected because they were in a good position to bring their insights to the study of the historical, social and economic forces at work in the formulation and implementation of educational policy, try to understand the nature of a new educational reform era. They were also selected to represent the voices of people, teachers, administrators, academics and consultants who are immersed in, and keen observers of the change process at work. The material they represent is significant in its own right and should resonate with the experiences of many who have sought to manage and direct the process, and/or have been immersed in it themselves.

The cases in this volume are designed to capture these different experiences of educational change; to contemplate it and to portray it in its cross-cultural complexity from different contexts and different points of view. Case-study methodology has grown in scope and sophistication and the cases presented here capture this diversity. Some of the studies follow what might now be called a more traditional approach, others are cases as exemplars, rather than case studies. Some employ narrative methods under the rubric of retrospective accounts, and others point to the case-study method as the source of hypothesis generation and are not at all disinterested in the nature of generalization. All of the cases exemplify the change process at work, for we would argue that there is such a thing which is identifiable, has an air of predicability about it, and once recognized and understood can be directed and managed. That we have failed to do so on any grand scale to date is probably why the voluminous literature on change and the collective recorded experience of four decades of change management, on the whole makes such dismal yet fascinating reading. We hope that the various contributors will cause the serious reader to pause and reflect on this in some detail, for while we understand better the nature and complexity of implementation, we are perhaps a little less certain about the nature of change itself than we once were. It has become more highly differentiated from the tidal wave which tends to overwhelm us in its human dimensions, to the steady surf, and the ripples and currents all of which variously interplay to reinforce or work against human intents and agency in a given setting and at a given scale.

In trying to bring order to some of this complexity, this book has been arranged in three sections. The first section illustrates structural and organizational change from a national and/or system level point of view, in which the focus is more on changing structures rather than individuals and the consequences of these for systemic change. The second section deals essentially with the way policies are mediated into the practicalities

of changing organizations and practices involving both organizational and human interventions. The concluding section, at a number of different scales, represents the views of practitioners with a curriculum focus which is deemed to lie at the very heart of schooling.

We wish to thank the many people who have contributed to this volume knowingly or unknowingly in their interactions with us and with the contributors, and for the many insightful comments about what we were trying to do. In particular, we would like to thank Jane Piscioneri and Sheena Carter, at the University of Notre Dame, Australia, for their valuable secretarial support, and for their encouragement in bringing this manuscript together. If the various studies presented in this volume present a mirror to others in similar settings who are facing the same sorts of challenges and in so doing helps them avoid the pitfalls inherent in Santayana's dictum, 'Those who ignore the lessons of history are condemned to repeat them', this book will have achieved its purpose.

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List of Acronyms

AATE	Australian Association for the Teaching of English
ACTU	Australian Council of Trade Unions
AEC	Australian Education Council
AST	Advanced Skills Teacher
BSE	Board of Secondary Education
CEO	Catholic Education Office
CSEC	Cabinet Social Equity Committee
CSSO	Chief State Schools Officer
DCSSO	Deputy Chief State Schools Officer
DES	Department of Education and Science
EQI	Educational Qualifications Initiative
ERO	Education Review Office
ESL	English as a Second Language
ExCET	Examination for Certification of Educators of Texas
HB	House Bill
HMI	Her Majesty's Inspectorate
IOX	Instructional Objectives Exchange
KERA	Kentucky Education Reform Act
MSE	Monitoring Standards in Education
NCNZ	National Curriculum of New Zealand
NCREL	North Central Regional Educational Laboratory
NEQA	National Educational Qualifications Authority
NPQTL	National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning
NZCER	New Zealand Council for Educational Research
NZQA	New Zealand Qualifications Authority
NZSTA	New Zealand School Trustees Association
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEB	Public Examinations Board
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SATs	Standardized Attainment Tasks
SBE	State Board of Education
SCOPE	Select Committee on Public Education
SDE	State Department of Education
SEA	Secondary Education Authority
SOS	Student Outcome Statements

SSC	State Services Commission
SSTUWA	State School Teachers Union of Western Australia
STC	Secondary Teachers' College
TAs	Teacher Assessments
TAAS	Texas Assessment of Academic Skills
TAE	Tertiary Admissions Examination
TASP	Texas Academic Skills Program
TDC	Trade Development Council
TEAMS	Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills
TECAT	Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers
TEE	Tertiary Entrance Examination
TTAS	Texas Teacher Appraisal System
UWA	The University of Western Australia
VCE	Victorian Certificate of Education

Section I

Systemic Change

The papers in this section deal with structural change. In Chapter 1, Max Angus' paper examines the history of attempts at devolution of power and authority from strong centralized state systems of education to schools in the past twenty years. The first attempt, in 1973, was initiated by the Australian Commonwealth Government in the face of opposition from state bureaucracies. Angus attributes to this attempt a desire to humanize the large bureaucratic state education systems, in the belief that responsibility was likely to be most effectively discharged when the decision makers were also the implementors with the obligation to justify their decisions enhanced by the probability of profiting from them.

The second cycle of devolution was initiated by state governments intent on getting better value for their money. The discourse associated with this initiative was located in corporate management and sought to apply the instruments of corporatism, not just to education systems, but to other state sector departments. Angus examines the flaws of this approach in the particular context of the Western Australian Department (renamed Ministry) of Education. This attempt at devolution occurred concurrently with major curriculum restructuring, and was challenged in the industrial arena on the basis of workloads and salaries. For the first time in fifty years, Western Australian teachers went out on strike. The initiative was also marked by the absolute reluctance of the centre to devolve any power to schools. Although pushing administration and responsibility out to the periphery was welcomed by central administrators, Angus suggests that granting any flexibility to schools was regarded by the centre as a potential loss of control.

Angus identifies school principals as a key factor in this battle. The Ministry had to resolve this dilemma of whether to allow the principals to become chief executives of self-determining schools, or whether to colonize them as central administration personnel. In the industrial disputes, the principals aligned themselves with their teaching staff, making subsequent demands for loyalty to the centre difficult to impose. A change of government in Western Australia might be seen to have moved devolution off the agenda, but indications were that the impetus had stalled anyway. An alternative approach applied in Victoria offered the possibility of moving the devolution reform forward by allowing schools to opt to work under a more deregulated setting while maintaining the centralized structure for those schools not ready or willing to opt out of it.

The third cycle identified by Angus derives from an industrial settlement between the federal level of government, business and the unions, which has enmeshed teachers unions and education, whether or not the teachers unions saw it as a desirable arrangement. Part of the negotiations was to shift the focus from teacher salaries to student learning and, through the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL), to allow individual schools the opportunities to restructure the organization of teaching and learning in schools. The self-managing team was the

core construct, but school staff had to commit themselves to improving student learning, promoting collaborative problem solving and evaluating their performance. The jury is still out on the success, or otherwise, of devolution initiatives in Australia, particularly the most recent initiatives.

In Chapter 2, Betty Steffy and Fenwick English offer a comparative study of legislated educational reform in Illinois and Kentucky viewed through a set of common criteria: events demographics; events leading to the reform; major components of the reform; what changed and what remained the same; and trouble spots. In both states, the impetus for reform was driven by highly public expressions of dissatisfaction with the existing system of educational management, finance and quality of educational outcomes. The Chicago Reform Act of 1988 had its genesis in city-wide teacher strikes; the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) was the end result of a class-action equity suit against the government on the grounds that the state system of funding education was unconstitutional.

The Chicago Reform Act (1988) was an attempt to shift some of the political control of the school system away from the central level to the schools. Steffy and English attribute the 'no-change' result of the Act to several interacting factors. These included:

- compulsion to operate within existing labour union contractual guidelines, enforced by legal action;
- a projected and increasing revenue shortfall;
- inability to decentralize support services and resources to schools;
- exclusion of local school councils from education as opposed to governance issues;
- failure to improve educational achievement of students;
- failure of lobby groups to find a leverage point to speed up change.

In contrast, the Kentucky Educational Reform Act is characterized as an integrated comprehensive program to produce change in the areas of curriculum, finance and governance. Emerging from the case study, Steffy and English identify several paradoxes of educational reform with a devolution agenda. These make interesting reading set against Angus' discussion of the difficulties of devolution in Western Australia.

The Texas Education Reforms (House Bill 72), analysed by Sandra Neubert in Chapter 3, were generated in response to the *A Nation at Risk* Report published in 1983. House Bill 72 addressed similar issues to the KERA Bill, namely:

- the inequitable school finance structure;
- improvement of the quality of teachers by providing a career ladder, salary increases, a required competency exam and state-funded loan programs for prospective teachers;

- enhancement of student attainment by making school attendance mandatory, developing new assessment instruments, and;
- making participation in extracurricular activities such as sport contingent upon academic achievement.

Unlike the three American cases presented by Steffy and English and Neubert however, Cathy Wylie suggests that the press for devolution and educational reform did not arise from public dissatisfaction with the education system, although the 1975 Educational Development Conference (1975) recorded a demand for more community involvement in schools and educational decision making. The driving force, she believes, came from government perceptions of the possible role of education in addressing national interests. In New Zealand, unlike the Western Australian case described by Angus, the reorganization abolished education boards and the regional arm of the Department of Education, making each school a stand-alone unit.

In Chapter 4, Wylie examines the impact of devolution on the schools on issues such as increased workloads, financial management, school site innovation, community involvement through the boards of trustees, equity provision, student attainment and curriculum provision.

In concert, this group of studies illuminates structural change processes at work at the system level. Here, political and organizational perspectives are used to illustrate how intended, as well as unintended, effects introduce an element of unpredictability when whole clusters of innovations are implemented systemwide on a shortened timescale.

Chapter 1

Devolution of School Governance in an Australian State School System: Third Time Lucky?

Max Angus

Devolution of decision making within the state public school systems was a key factor of the commonwealth government programs designed to improve Australian education during the 1970s and early 1980s. In the blueprint for reform of the Interim Committee for the Australian Schools Commission (1973) entitled *Schools In Australia*, it was clearly stated that schools would be better places if the centralized control of schools by state education authorities were loosened. This was a radical notion: since the late nineteenth century, public schooling was provided for the substantial majority of children through centrally organized state school systems. The maintenance of a highly centralized administration seemed the best way by which education of comparable quality could be guaranteed across the states (Mossenson, 1972). The large, centralized state education departments seemed to be permanent features of the public administration landscape.

The Commonwealth Experiment: A First Attempt at Devolution

Commencing in 1973, the commonwealth authorities, through the (then) newly established Schools Commission, injected a huge increase in funding into an arena that had hitherto been occupied solely by the states. While the funding was welcomed by the states, the conditional acceptance of commonwealth priorities and values was not. The devolution proposals were regarded as an attack on the authority of state systems, and during the early years were contested vigorously, though this became more desultory once it became clear that there was likely to be little change in the balance of power to administer school systems.

Although the commonwealth reforms arose from an assessment of the financial needs of schools, the promotion of devolution was not rooted in the economic rationalism that was to overtake thinking a decade later. The rationale, put simply in *Schools in Australia*, states that the

> grass-roots approach to the control of schools reflects a conviction that responsibility will be most effectively discharged where the people entrusted with making decisions are also the people responsible for carrying them out, with an obligation to justify them, and in a position to profit from their experience. (p. 10)

The devolution objective was advanced through special purpose programs for disadvantaged students and through a program that promoted innovation. Funding was disbursed to schools via state and local committees, comprised mostly of school and community personnel; the committees largely bypassed the state department offices. In most cases, state authorities were ready to accept the funding, but retained control by renegotiating details of school-initiated proposals before allowing them to proceed. As events unfolded, very few proposals directly challenged the central decision-making authority of state departments. Pulling in its horns, the Schools Commission sought to achieve its devolution goals by changing the culture of school systems rather than by provoking a head-on contest between the commonwealth and the states over administrative structures. Several of the special purpose programs were abolished after a decade of operation, though the programs for the support of disadvantaged children continue to function.

It is difficult to assess the impact of the devolution push of the Commonwealth. At best, the direct effects seem to have been marginal. In the case of Western Australia, school projects funded by the Innovations Program led to some system-wide policy changes. For example, schools can now use their own funds to purchase buses — a contravention of previous central policy which opposed this development on cost-benefit grounds. Other examples of this order and kind can be found but, institutionally, schools remained much the same and the central office continued as firmly in control as ever. The programs were accommodated within the central bureaucracy and their radical intent was never fully realised.

State Government Initiated Reform: The Second Cycle

The Better Schools Report as an Example

Ironically, fourteen years after the publication of the Commonwealth's *Schools in Australia*, in January 1987 the State Government of Western Australia issued *Better Schools in Western Australia: A program for improvement*, a report recommending the devolution of decision making from the central bureaucracy to schools. According to the report, the corner-stone of the restructuring should be the 'self-determining' school. The report urged the replacement of direct, centralized control by broader macro controls

which would enable schools to exercise autonomy over their management in pursuit of system-wide objectives. Symbolically, the Education Department was to be replaced by a 'Ministry of Education'. In a system of 750 schools, spread over a third of the continent and with a history of highly centralized decision making, the reforms proposed for Western Australia in the *Better Schools* report were the most radical this century.

Similar policies had already began to be implemented in some states and territories, most notably Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory. Others followed. New South Wales initiated its devolution program with the publication of the *Scott Report* in 1989. In all cases, the devolution policies were propelled by a government commitment to the reform of public sector management across agencies and departments as much as from a concern for the quality of education *per se*. In contrast with the earlier cycle of devolution, the Commonwealth government played no part in the promotion of devolution the second time around. Nor for that matter was there any national coordination or promotion; there was no national guru, definitive literature, nor key sponsoring agency. The core ideas spread like an epidemic across systems and state boundaries. Labor and conservative state governments followed similar courses — there were no discernible differences of a party-political kind: the ideology of devolution, and its expression in management terms, were interpreted similarly across systems.

The motives of the state governments during the 1980s were plain enough, though were not always made explicit: governments were under pressure to improve and extend services; the education sector consumed between a third and a quarter of state expenditure; the education enterprise was run by management practices developed during a more affluent era; efficiencies could be found by reducing the size of the central bureaucracies (which grew dramatically during the 1970s and 1980s due, largely, to additional commonwealth funding) by giving staff at the school site more control over the deployment of resources. The underlying purpose of the reforms was not to cut education expenditure but to get better value for it, recognizing that for the foreseeable future, governments could expect to encounter increasing difficulty in raising revenue to meet the rising costs of public services. The participation of senior educational officials in the process ameliorated the more radical expressions of economic rationalism in the restructuring of their departments.

The paradigm applied across the public sector can be expressed simply in terms of means and ends. There are four steps:

1 A clear articulation by central authorities of the desired ends.
2 The provision of resources to local authorities conditional upon agreement to achieve the stated ends.
3 The empowerment of local authorities to determine the means.
4 Further central provision of resources conditional upon the

demonstration by local authorities of progress towards the achievement of the agreed ends.

In the education context, the government was not intent upon devolving to schools the authority to determine what the ends should be. Quite the opposite. Underpinning the paradigm was the belief that better performance would result from a sharper focusing on systemic priorities. What was to be devolved to schools was the authority (and the capacity) to determine the way in which the school could achieve the agreed outcomes.

The Machinery for Devolution in School Systems

State education authorities across Australia adapted the corporate management machinery in order to put their devolution proposals into effect. The core instrumentation consisted of:

- a mandatory development plan in each school (in effect, the school's corporate plan);
- single line budgets/block grants for schools containing funds previously allocated centrally for specific purposes;
- formally constituted school decision-making groups, containing staff and community representatives, which endorse plans and authorize budgets (and in some cases, select staff);
- an external auditing capacity which has an educational, as well as financial, remit;
- central offices more focused than in the past on defining policy parameters and standards; and
- decentralized support services for schools, based either in schools or in local offices.

The language and form of the apparatus varied. South Australia, for example, established a special office of evaluators-come-inspectors to 'audit' a school's performance. Western Australia used a locally-based superintendent to undertake these tasks. The functions of school decision-making groups (or school councils as they are also called) varied from state to state, with the Victorian councils having greater powers than elsewhere. School support services were also organized differently on a regional or district basis, depending on state and territory circumstances.

It is apposite to compare the origins of the Australian movement towards devolution with those of the US. In the latter, the literature suggests that the interest in school-based (i.e., site-based) management had arisen from within an orthodox school improvement paradigm which emphasized local ownership or empowerment and stressed the importance

of regarding the school as the most productive unit for managing educational change (David, 1989). School-based management appears to be a convenient concept for collecting together conventional wisdom and educational research findings about how 'good' schools operate. In the Australian case, the origins are found in the drive to reform public sector management with the focus on efficiency and the better use of existing resources. The language used to describe the devolution machinery and the restructuring in Australia has the resounding ring of corporate managerialism (audit, performance appraisal, corporate plan, performance indicators and so on). However, it would be inaccurate to describe the reforms, such as those contained in the *Better Schools* report, as straightforward examples of economic rationalism. For example, incorporated in the *Better Schools* ideology is a belief that the quality of education will improve when the responsibility for problem solving is shifted from the central bureaucracy to the school or individual. The assumption that school improvement can be achieved more successfully through local control is the under-exposed side of the *Better Schools* reforms.

Implementation of the Second Cycle

The Aftermath of the Release of the Better Schools Report

In Western Australia, the release of the *Better Schools* report was met with bewilderment and protest. The genesis of the report was a functional review of the Education Department which was carried out by an agency independent of the Department and answerable directly to the government. The Education Department was the twenty-seventh government instrumentality to be so examined and by far the largest. The review, contrary to conventional practice in the education sector, was neither open nor participative. The full report was not made public. Teachers were not prepared for the abridged version, *Better Schools*, nor for its immediate endorsement by the government. Their concerns were immediately taken up by the Teachers Union. From day one, the reform program was represented by its opponents as conspiratorial, anti-educational and impracticable. Unions in other states and territories reacted similarly. For example, the implementation of the *Scott Report* in New South Wales encountered concerted teacher union opposition.

Teachers, in general, saw no need for radical restructuring. From their perspective the system did not appear to be in crisis. Most were satisfied with the existing system, subject to some fine-tuning. Further, teachers were well down the track with the implementation of curriculum reform and, in secondary schools in particular, were tired as a result of that effort. The educational bureaucracy itself was little better prepared. There had been no proselytising prior to the release of the *Better Schools* report if for no other reason than that only a small circle of government advisers

and officials were familiar with the report's contents. Hence, the implementation began in defiance of most of the conventional principles governing the smooth introduction of organizational change. Whether the implementation could have begun otherwise is a moot point. It seems doubtful that a report so uncompromising in its commitment to restructuring could have been produced had there been widespread consultation with the education establishment, although, on the other hand, the recommendations could have been more clearly articulated and positively represented to teachers had it not been released so pre-emptorily.

The Status of the Implementation

The *Better Schools* report contained a five-year time-line for the full implementation of its recommendations. In effect, teachers were told that the key objectives of the report were not negotiable though the manner of implementation and the time-lines were subject to review. Seven years on, the report card reads as follows:

- The restructuring of the central and district offices was completed, though the promise to halve the central office bureaucracy was never met — there is still a strong centrifugal pull in the way the system operates. Successive ministers for education shied away from the drastic restructuring proposed as a result of assertive interest group representation.
- Legislation was passed enabling school decision-making groups to operate; most schools have established these groups, some with sophisticated structures. However, the powers of the groups are limited. For example, the government quickly reneged on proposals in the report that school decision-making groups should select staff.
- School development plan guidelines were issued and most schools formulated some kind of plan, ranging from rudimentary to sophisticated.
- Centrally held funds were consolidated into a single grant and phased in over several years. Although it was expected that the full operating costs of schools would be incorporated into the grant by 1992, the major element in the school running costs — staff salaries — continues to be firmly held by central authorities.
- The development of the audit function has lagged. District superintendents, the auditing agents,were unable to assume their role in a practical sense because schools had not yet acquired the means of accounting for their performance. Also, many of the district superintendents hankered for the old days in which their relationship with schools was more congenial than the hard-edged audit role presumed.

The most contentious area has been school staffing. There has been strong union opposition to the notion of local staff selection, or indeed any interference to the highly complex, centralized staffing process which governs promotion and appointment to the more and less desirable locations in the state. In the face of strong teacher opposition, the government's commitment to this recommendation in the report was withdrawn so that schools were not able to be self-determining with regard to the recruitment, appointment and deployment of staff — the school's key resource. Now, seven years on, the implementation is barely halfway towards completion. Much of the essential infrastructure is not in place. The organization is operating with elements of a devolved and a centralized system and has the virtues of neither. Assessing the strengths of devolution has been difficult while the system remains in this unfinished state. Most school staff are of the view that they are currently working in a devolved system and do not recognize much difference from the way things were in the past.

Accounting for the Progress

Setting aside the way in which the *Better Schools* report was formulated and released there are other reasons which explain the rocky start:

- The report came hard on the heels of another wide-scale review of the education system, (Western Australian Ministry of Education, 1984), hereafter called *The Beazley Report*, which contained a mammoth 272 recommendations for change and improvement. *The Beazley Report* focused mostly on curriculum change and assumed that the organizational structures of the education system would stay intact. The implementation of changes to the secondary school curriculum, a consequence of *The Beazley Report*, were in full swing when the *Better Schools* report was released. In the minds of many teachers, taken together, the proposals of the two reports constituted too much change and too much work imposed too quickly.
- The Teachers' Union opposed the *Better Schools* report publicly because of the decision of the government not to consult it regarding the changes, but more privately for various philosophical and political reasons. The basis of the opposition was often vague or speculative since the *Better Schools* report was a slim document describing what needed to be done while remaining silent on the detail how the changes should take effect. However, more generally underpinning union opposition was the fear that devolution of authority would lead to deregulation of industrial practices and conditions of work with the consequential weakening of the centralized decision-making structure upon which union power rested. While education authorities were espousing the rhetoric of

devolution the Teachers Union leaders were oppositional, or circumspect at best.

- During 1989, commonwealth and state governments issued radical, new wage fixing guidelines which required industries to demonstrate improvement in structural efficiencies in order to gain salaries increases. Teachers were of the view that, in real terms, their salaries had been eroded over the past decade while at the same time they had already borne the brunt of substantial restructuring. Their claim for special treatment was not supported by the government or accepted by the State Industrial Commission and they resorted to industrial action. The *Better Schools* changes became a bargaining chip in the fight for salary increases. The Teachers' Union gained strong support for its policy of a moratorium on change until its members were back-paid for the restructuring already done.
- The translation of theory into practice turned out to be conceptually and practically more difficult than initially envisaged. There were no pilot projects and no system models elsewhere sufficiently advanced to learn from. Central office staff were expected to turn the *Better Schools* report into an implementation document from the early days. This was hard to accomplish quickly since virtually every feature of the former Education Department required redefinition and clarification. Staff at all levels faced uncertainty and ambiguity with the net result that many sidelined themselves and adopted a 'wait-and-see' attitude.

In other states, though there were local issues, the tenor of the resistance was much the same. The restructuring faced opposition within the departmental bureaucracies: from officials unconvinced that there were fundamental dysfunctions requiring heavy-handed fixing by outside agencies; from union officials who saw the restructuring, if it were ever able to be fully implemented, as an undermining of its power base; from a large body of teachers confused about the point of the whole exercise; from school principals angry at having to manage their divided loyalties, and; from parent advocates who sensed that they would have less control than they were promised in the official rhetoric. More comprehensive national analyses of these events can be found in Frazer *et al.* (1985), Harman *et al.* (1991) and Lindgard *et al.* (1993).

Policy Dilemmas

Self-determination Or Line Management Control?

One of the constant tensions since 1987 has been the definition of the limits of the school's autonomy. Some teachers took the slogan 'self-determining schools' to mean literally just that — unlimited autonomy

without regard for system-wide policy parameters and agreed standards. Subsequent attempts by the central office to define the policy parameters were regarded as an infringement of the school's responsibility. The central office was caught in a classic 'Catch 22' position: the more reticent it remained regarding the delineation of the policy framework, the more it encouraged the position that self-determining schools can ignore systemic *accountability; on the* other hand, the further it proceeded with the delineation, the greater the criticism that *Better Schools* was fraudulent and designed to limit the authority of schools. School staffs did not regard the definition of their responsibilities to be to their advantage. The matter was not helped by senior school officials who interpreted the directive that schools must exercise their new responsibilities 'within Ministry policies and parameters' to mean 'business as usual'.

School principals have been at the nub of this dilemma. The intended relationship between the principal of a self-determining school and the executive of the central office has remained problematic. Until 1987, the responsibilities for the management of schools were conveniently diffused. The system ran to a large extent on good will and on the understanding that the Director General had the authority to direct school staff on most matters (these powers were rarely invoked). Some seventy superintendents, superordinate to principals in the organizational hierarchy, travelled about schools, seldom challenging the school principal, though able to do so. In effect, principals shared responsibility with superintendents for the running of their school. For example, superintendents assessed staff, determined transfers and evaluated the curriculum; principals managed the day-to-day operations.

The *Better Schools* restructuring sought to do away with the ambiguity. According to its doctrine, the principal was to exercise end-of-line responsibility for the management of the school and must, therefore, guarantee the end product. Principals were to be accountable to a single superintendent for their performance. Superintendents were accountable to the Ministry Executive. While on paper the line management was flat and unambiguous, in practice the relationship between superintendent and principal was uneasy and obscure. Superintendents saw themselves clearly as part of the organization's management structure whereas principals did not, partly because their organizational responsibilities and status had never previously been spelled out, but primarily because the concept of principal as a member of the organization's middle-management, and at the same time leader of a self-determining school, seemed incongruous or contradictory.

The new structure was tested during 1989 in an intensive and often bitter industrial campaign over salaries, led by the Teachers' Union. For the first time in fifty years, teachers in Western Australia went on a general strike. Principals lined up with their teachers in a demonstration of solidarity against the government and central office management. There

was a cleavage within the organization between the level of superintendent and principal. The problem facing the government was how to manage an organization which has such a disjunction and at the same time promote devolution among schools.

One approach to solving this problem might have been to establish principals unequivocally as middle and senior level managers and thereby weld the schools to the central office. Principals would be employed under conditions similar to other central office employees. Senior school-based staff could also be given the same status so that school and central office management clearly represented the interests of a single, unified organization distributed over a large number of sites. By these means, schools would become part of a more tightly-coupled organization. Under these circumstances they would be self-determining to the extent that central management withdrew from micro decision making about school operations. This would not necessarily be a popular solution. Teachers would regard this resolution with suspicion — the notion of teachers as public servants is alien to them and its introduction would be seen as a ruse to impose further governmental control on schools.

A second approach might have been to come to terms with the structural separation of schools and central office rather than try and mend it. The strategy would require the development of a different kind of organization — a confederation of 750 government schools, each led by a chief executive who is accountable to the government through some contractual arrangement which sets out agreed systemic priorities and goals. The central office would constitute a minimal bureaucracy that *enabled* the system to work rather than acted as the *core* of the organization. However, to reconfigure the school system into 700 or 800 autonomous institutions (and many more schools in the larger state systems) bound to a central bureaucracy by performance agreements or contracts, even if managerially feasible, would constitute a radical departure from the status quo and probably be no more popular among principals and teachers than the alternative tightening of organizational structures. Further, as long as staffing remained a central function the concept was not fully realizable. But supposing that each school could be self-governing with regard to human and financial resources, it would theoretically be possible to transform the existing system into a networked association of schools, not unlike the associations of private schools that educate about a quarter of the state's schoolchildren. Recent reforms in New Zealand (Picot, 1988; Gordon, 1992) have moved that country's schools down just such a path. (See also the chapters by Snook, Peters and Wylie, in this and the companion volume, for a delineation of this and its consequences).

The principal as chief executive is the course most consistent with the ideology of *Better Schools* but, from the government's point of view, it is also the most hazardous. Empowering principals as chief executives with full and unambiguous responsibility for school management has been

regarded as a recipe for organizational anarchy. The central bureaucracy, with its history of tight control, would also find it difficult to accept not only because it goes against the grain to give power away, but also because it has traditionally been finally accountable for the performance of schools at the level of the most petty detail. There would be fears that central office would continue to be publicly responsible for the performance of errant chief-executives-come-principals. Letting go of power requires as much finesse as grabbing it.

The choice of direction is of critical strategic importance. Should the principal be attached more closely to the central management structure or more formally detached from it? Each option represents a distinctive shift from the status quo which had prevailed whereby principals, in some loosely defined respects, were responsible for the management of their schools and in other respects were not, and in which, under some circumstances, occupied a line management position in the organizational structure and in other circumstances did not.

The Role of Government in the Management of the School System

One of the precepts underpinning the government's drive to improve public sector management is the understanding that elected governments have the responsibility of establishing policy and that public service bureaucracies have the job of putting the policy into effect (Weller and Lewis, 1989). In education, where until the early 1980s departmental bureaucracies had been largely left to their own devices to establish education policy, the insistence by government that policy setting was its prerogative was regarded by many teachers as intrusive and taken as evidence of the politicization of education. The *Better Schools* report is often cited as a prime example of that politicization.

The central educational bureaucracy has been put on the spot because of this development. In steadfastly promoting government policy it has been criticized for being in the government's pocket, particularly when the policies it promotes are not popular among teachers. Advocacy by the central bureaucracy on behalf of teachers occurring within the minister's office or cabinet sub-committees is neither public nor visible. Consequently, school staffs have increasingly felt alienated from, or distrustful of, the central office. Devolution proposals have exacerbated these feelings. The effort to reduce the dependence of schools on the central office through devolution has been misinterpreted as evidence of the selling out of schools.

Teachers, unlike public servants who staff the central office, have the legal right to criticize publicly government policies and practice. The government has the power to require teachers to carry out lawful direction. The powers accorded to teachers to use the media as a platform from which to criticize government, and of government to require teachers to

implement policy, are rarely exercised, but they provide an important backdrop for the devolution proposals. The intention of *Better Schools* was not to enhance the capacity of schools to oppose the government of the day, either through media criticism or in defiance of policy implementation. Yet, while school staffs do not accept the entitlement of government to establish educational policies and priorities, the devolution of greater power and responsibility to schools may mean that the government of the day is making a rod for its own back. If principals, given the powers of chief executives, decide to reject the corporate line, and have the means of so doing, the public school *system* will not be manageable.

The Impact of the Reforms on Workload

One unintended outcome of the Commonwealth reforms of the 1970s and 1980s was the reinforcement of the notion that school improvement is achieved through the accretion of functions and structures rather than through the redesign of the work that schools do. The immediate availability of substantial funding prompted the quickest and easiest solutions to schools' problems — add-ons. The functions and superstructure of the central office and individual schools grew rapidly in this environment and so commensurately did the complexity of their management.

The *Better Schools* proposals called for a streamlining of the central office and devolution of responsibility to schools. In effect, what happened is that the central office found it easiest to devolve work rather than capacity to schools and was often unable to sever responsibility for the functions at either the school or central office level. The net result has been that schools have been asked to do more with, at best, only marginal increases in resources, and the central office has hung on to the control and as new priority areas for change have emerged has reverted to expanding the central bureaucracy. In addition to the various Beazley Committee changes (see Chapter 9 for a detailed treatment of these), school staff have had to contend with the development of the devolution mechanisms and, more recently, far-reaching reforms in the post-compulsory sector of schooling. The effect of these on workload has been cumulative — schools responsible as usual for doing the work, but with the additional burden of figuring out how to do it.

Where schools have sought their own solutions in keeping with the rhetoric of the *Better Schools* report they have faced an uphill battle. There are several reasons for this. First, they have encountered a plethora of bureaucratic constraints, chiefly of an industrial and legal kind, because both the unions and Ministry have been reluctant to establish more flexible conditions of work which would enhance local problem solving. The Teachers' Union feared that local solutions would erode the uniformity of working conditions across the system with the costs and benefits shared

unequally by members; the Union also feared that the solutions of enthusiasts might lead to the imposition of heavier work loads for all its members. Middle managers in the central office were also concerned that flexibility would make the system less manageable. Second, the culture of the organization did not nurture risk-takers; compliance with central prescription has been the norm. Third, rather than shredding red tape, central authorities appeared more intent on re-issuing it; there is a strong attachment to the system of micro controls. For these reasons, workload pressures continued to build up. Even enterprising school staffs, with a commitment to the concepts of devolution, wilted under the pressure.

There were several responses to this problem. One has been to consider a moratorium on further change — the government toyed with this possibility before rejecting it. Another has been to extend the implementation timelines. A third has been to put additional resources into schools (administrative staff and computers). The answer may ultimately lie in fundamental reviews by schools staffs of their functions with the prospect of pruning and recasting the internal structures (Ashenden, 1990). There is more than a touch of irony in that the *raison d'être* of the restructuring was to enable schools to use existing resources more effectively yet the implementation was seriously impeded because schools were unable to do so.

The Push Towards Completion of the Second Cycle

In Western Australia the *Better Schools* implementation has come to a halt with the non-Labor Government dissociating itself from an invention of its Labor predecessors. In other states and territories; Queensland, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, governments have put devolution on the 'back burner', satisfied with the progress that had been made. In Victoria, however, which was hardest hit by the economic recession and the financial policies of the former State government, there has been a resurgence of political will to pursue the corporate management reforms to their fully realized end. The new, non-Labor Government is determined to move beyond the agenda of 'getting better value for money'. With an eye on the State's depleted treasury the government is embarking on structural reform designed to get better value for *less* money. Victoria is clearly the 'bell-wether' State in this regard. In October 1992 it announced its *Schools of the Future* program and set about implementing the program in an uncompromising way (Slattery, 1992). In so doing, resource levels were to be reduced to national averages; school principals and their school councils given greater powers to manage their schools; the regulatory framework re-written to enable the delegation of authority

to take effect; and the union powers to control workplace reform diminished, or removed altogether, under circumstances where schools staff sought to work outside the orthodox industrial framework.

The policy dilemmas that had stalled the efforts of previous governments were decisively resolved without prolonged public consultation. The importance of school principals in the reform process had been quickly recognized. Several principals had been seconded from their schools to work on the *Schools of the Future* documentation since it was necessary that principals own the document and its consequences. Principals were delegated powers that had previously been held centrally and regarded as sacrosanct. School councils were authorized to take responsibility for school administration in the broader sense, and the 'sacred cow' of staff selection was even sacrificed. The government has side-stepped the 'either-or' dilemma of whether to install principals as line managers or establish them as chief executives. They became both.

In order to avoid the inevitable resistance which accompanies coercion, the Victorian Government followed the lead of New South Wales. There, the Department of School Education set in train, in 1992, an *opting-out* strategy whereby schools could elect to manage their operations under considerably more deregulated conditions than the mainstream schools (Boston, 1992). Victoria has followed suit: schools may elect to join the *Schools of the Future* program. The attractiveness of the *opting-out* strategy is that the emerging (devolved) system can be 'grown' alongside the old until it is sufficiently developed and has acquired a large enough constituency of support that it can become the dominant partner. This 'parasitic' model does not require the initial disturbance that usually accompanies system-wide reform in which all schools are expected to 'march in step'. A problem for the government in implementing the strategy is that central authorities must manage two different systems simultaneously, duplicating workload and risking the confusion that arises from mixed messages. Nevertheless, the strategy may catch on with non-Labor governments in Western Australia and South Australia, dissatisfied with what they perceive to be half-baked restructuring efforts that date back a decade or more ago.

Australian education systems constitute a kind of patchwork quilt. Management structures vary on a state-by-state basis. While it is unlikely they will ever assume a uniform pattern, they have moved towards devolved structures of one kind or another since the Commonwealth's initiative in the early 1970s. Delegation of staff selection powers to schools by the Victorian Government is a significant step if for no other reason than that if this attempt succeeds then other states are likely to follow. Once devolution of staff selection is in place then devolution of school governance in Australia will have passed a threshold and it will be possible to consider the second cycle to have approached a conclusion.

The Third Cycle

The Tripartite Alliance: Government, Business and Unions

Industry restructuring, designed to make the Australian economy more internationally competitive, constitutes the third cycle of devolution. A driving force has been the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU), the national governing body for the trade union movement. Union and business leaders, together with government officials, travelled to Western Europe during the mid-1980s to examine the state of industry restructuring. The report of the mission by the Department of Trade (1987), *Australia Reconstructed*, urged the adoption of industry-wide reforms to improve productivity, without which the country's standard of living was set to slide dramatically downhill.

The thinking that underpinned *Australia Reconstructed* was reflected in the revision in 1988 of the national wage fixing principles set by the federal and state industrial relations commissions. Salary increases, as of 1989, would not be granted by the commissions unless employers and unions demonstrated that their industry had taken steps to improve its structural efficiency, a concept that incorporated notions of skills-related career paths, multi-skilling and the enhancement of flexibility and efficiency. However, new, flexible patterns of work organization could not be introduced until the industrial awards, which specified duties salaries and working conditions of employees, were recast. Hence, industry restructuring and award restructuring became synonymous.

While most members of the education sector initially rejected a construction of education as an 'industry' with the purpose of improving productivity, the political settlement between the Commonwealth Government and ACTU required them to do so, at least nominally. The 'bottom line' was salaries; the teacher unions had no option but to pursue salary increases in accordance with the wage fixing rules established by the federal and state commission. Union negotiations with employers focused on matching salary increases with structural reforms that would lead to increased productivity. Initially, the deals struck by teacher employers and unions were trade-offs, allowing employers to pursue centrally designed curricula and systemic restructuring projects in exchange for salary increases. Nothing was devolved in this process. The new wage fixing principles allowed employers to continue with their agendas while unions could bargain for salary increases — extra pay for extra effort, in effect. This was not the outcome sought by ACTU and Commonwealth Government who wanted more fundamental reform.

Since the 1988 National Wage Case there have been further fundamental reforms of the industrial relations system. Underpinning the reforms has been the principle that the power of the centralized wage fixing system should be substantially curtailed and that there should be greater

capacity for employers and employees to negotiate wages and conditions which reflect the circumstances of the individual enterprise. Further, unions and business leaders have tended to reach a high level of consensus on what constitutes best practice in work organization. The Taylorist frameworks of control have been replaced with a new orthodoxy drawn from contemporary management literature in which those in management and those who work on the shop floor share a responsibility for the company's productivity and benefits. Even in school systems, the notion of self-managing teams and many of the ideas associated with Total Quality Management are now promoted by unions and employees alike as the proper basis of work organization. Whatever reservations teacher union leaders held about the wisdom of promoting workplace reform they were subdued by the unwavering commitment of the ACTU leadership who viewed the school system as a key instrument in its economic reform agenda. The vehicle used to promote these ideas was the National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning (NPQTL).

The National Project on the Quality of Teaching and Learning

The NPQTL was established late in 1990 at the initiative of the commonwealth Minister for Employment, Education and Training, John Dawkins, with strong backing from the ACTU. Following a turbulent year of salary negotiations under the new principles it was agreed by teacher unions and state education employers that the focus should shift from teacher salaries to student learning. Every state union, state employer and key representatives from private school sector agreed to join commonwealth and ACTU officials on the governing board of the NPQTL which was an astonishing response to the initiative. Equally astonishing, all continued to sit on the board during the three-year term of the NPQTL, notwithstanding changes of government. Such a coalition is unprecedented in Australian education.

The NPQTL was established in order to enable unions and teacher employers to respond to industry restructuring pressures on schools. All the parties eventually accepted that schools for the next decade would be expected to improve the quality of student learning: the skills and understandings required of school leaders were of a higher level and of a different order than required by business and industry in the past. Eventually, the governing board opted to set up a national pilot program, known as the National Schools Project, in which schools would be encouraged to explore how they could vary the standard pattern of work organization in order to find better ways of helping students learn. The fixed patterns of school organization — in which the class of thirty or so students taught by a single teacher was the basic building block, the school day followed a regular schedule for a specified period of time, and the

duties of teachers and other employees had become prescribed and unalterable in the NPQTL — were viewed as problematic and subject to revision. Because the organization of teachers' work was often circumscribed in awards and regulations, and because the NPQTL governing board contained the school and union officials with the power to exempt or recast the awards and regulations, the National Schools Project provided a unique opportunity to re-set the rules governing how teaching and learning should be organized in schools.

The National Schools Project ran from 1991 to 1993 for the duration of the NPQTL. At the scheduled conclusion of the NPQTL in December 1993 the parties agreed that the Project should be continued under a new name — the National Schools Network — with a national secretariat established in the New South Wales Department of School Education. But what had the National Schools Project achieved? Had this off-shoot of the industry restructuring movement provided schools with greater control over their operations?

By the end of the project, nearly 200 schools had taken up the initiative, including a small number from all the states and territories and from the government and non-government sectors. All of the parties had agreed to the principles shaping the project in which the self-managing team was accepted as a core construct. School staff were required to commit themselves to improving student learning, promoting collaborative problem solving, and evaluating their performance. Schools were encouraged to re-think the way in which they organized the work of the school. Where their proposals required some new form of organization or teaching, they were promised that they would be exempted from any regulation or agreement prohibiting the implementation of their plan — for at least the duration of the pilot project.

After two years the results of the National Schools Project were inconclusive. There was evidence that some individual schools had developed impressive projects, often under difficult conditions. In most cases, however, the schools would have been able to implement them without the edifice of the National Schools Project (Connors, 1993), and very few schools required exemptions from the regulatory framework in order to put their ideas into effect. At the termination of the NPQTL there was no major overhaul of the regulatory framework in order to allow for greater flexibility of work organization in schools. The National Schools Project appeared to demonstrate that there is no need for such drastic measures, although whether the results warranted such a conclusion is another matter. It is not at all clear whether the results are artifactual, reflecting the controls that were imposed on pilot schools underneath the blanket of rhetoric, or whether the results merely reflect the early stage of the project and that as the National Schools Network continues to evolve, increasing pressure will be applied to the regulatory framework in accordance with the ambitions of schools (Angus, 1994). While it is the case that schools

were encouraged to think creatively about work organization and teaching, it is also true that they knew that their proposals required the approval of senior departmental and union officials, and that the whole exercise was being conducted on a trial basis. It was clear that ultimately central authorities were running the project and at no stage did the authorities, union or departmental, indicate that they were willing to allow schools to take final responsibility.

Did the NPQTL ever offer an opportunity for the devolution of decision making of work practices to school sites? On paper, the answer is 'yes'. For example, the State School Teachers Union of Western Australia (SSTUWA) took the view in 1990 that

> . . . devolution is the key to maximising the quality of education in government schools. By taking the management of individual schools away from the Ministry of Education and putting it in the hands of teachers, schools would become more responsive, flexible and accountable to the communities they served. (SSTUWA, *Western Teacher*, p. 3).

In concert with union colleagues in other states, however, the fear that employers (that is, state governments) could not finally be trusted led them to want to keep hold of the reins. Employers, also, thought devolution might produce 'better schools' but were fearful that they might hand over control of the workplace to the unions — hence the need for vigilance. Each party was not only distrustful of the other, but fundamentally doubted the capacity of schools to act in the collective interest of teachers and students, a doubt fed by a century of centralized control and dependence-building. There is still a powerful momentum for restructuring that will be applied across the industry in general, including the education sector, and the National Schools Network may provide some kind of spearhead. However, without the governing board of the NPQTL, it will be difficult for the project to amount to more than a diversion involving a few hundred of the nation's schools while the remainder operate on a business-as-usual basis within a highly regulated, centralized system.

Conclusion

The Score Card

The first cycle of devolution can be characterized as an attempt by education reformers to humanize the large bureaucratic state education systems. The reformers, the state and commonwealth officials, the academics, and community representatives who composed the Schools Commission were motivated by the belief that good schools could not be run by remote

control from the central office of large state departments. More freedom and responsibility were needed by school staffs. There was barely a whiff of economic rationalism in *Schools in Australia*, even though the Chair of the Interim Committee of the Schools Commission, Peter Karmel, was an eminent economist. In the tug-of-war that followed the launch of the Commission's programs it soon became evident that some accommodation would be needed with state education departments if the program objectives were to be met. The head-to-head devolution contest was wound down by the Schools Commission even though the value of devolution was promoted wherever possible by funding schools directly or via non-departmental mechanisms.

The second cycle of devolution was initiated by state governments intent on getting better value for their public sector expenditure. Devolution was one of a number of management strategies (collectively referred to as 'corporate management') which the central agencies of government were persuaded would generate a more productive public sector. Although initiated by state governments, education officials were able to adapt the instruments of corporate management to fit the educational agendas of schools and school systems, albeit sometimes awkwardly or uncomfortably. The first wave of devolution had somewhat prepared the ground.

School-based decision making had been talked about for more than a decade, and in some states and territories (Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, in particular) had been realized in the form of schools councils. The commonwealth had given schools some experience in managing their budgets through a series of direct grants. Schools also became accustomed to writing plans and proposals related to their school objectives. Most states reviewed their systems of accountability which had been found to be superficial and inadequate. Finally, teachers had become generally accepting, though cynical, towards the constant restructuring in central offices which seemed to amount to little more than 'musical chairs' for senior bureaucrats. In their watered down forms, the devolution programs in the states appeared inconsequential when viewed from the classroom door, once the paranoia associated with the release of the official reports began to dissipate. In a gigantic form of goal displacement, the ends were ingested by the means. It is too early to tell whether the reactivated efforts of state governments to push ahead with devolution, prompted primarily by cost cutting, will achieve benefits for students. Before it can be determined whether devolution 'works' it has first to be fully installed.

The third cycle of devolution in schools has been propelled by the industry restructuring agendas of governments, unions, and employers. The term 'devolution' is not usually associated with this cycle. The preferred terms are 'empowerment', 'worker control', 'collaborative problem solving', 'enterprise bargaining', 'teamwork', and so on, borrowing from the lexicons of industrial relations and business management. Critics are

entitled to form a somewhat jaundiced view as to whether industry restructuring amounts to a form of devolution of power or whether it is being promoted by management because it is a more effective means of control. Until recently, teacher unions in most states have been partners in industry restructuring and have set aside ideological scruples. They have been persuaded by ACTU leaders that without workplace reform the economy will decline and that it is in their members' interest to proceed as a partner in the recovery rather than as an adversary. As long as unions represent a large body of teacher opinion then their support for any devolution (or restructuring) program is essential if the ideas are to be taken up in schools. The power of the unions was clearly demonstrated during the *Better Schools* controversy (Chadbourne, 1992) yet the current government response in non-Labor states is to marginalize union participation in industry restructuring as far as possible. The third cycle has not yet run its course.

Will and Capacity

Milbrey McLaughlin (1987) wrote that for policies to be implemented successfully there must be 'will and capacity'. In the case of *Better Schools* the political will evaporated after the State Minister, Robert Pearce, was shifted from Education to a new portfolio. Successive ministers applied the brakes in the face of stiff union and wider professional opposition. Whether future governments will find the will to see the reforms through to their conclusion is hard to predict, since political will is tied to the prospect of occupancy of the government benches. Governments turn pusillanimous in the face of receding public support. The Western Australian experience with *Better Schools* provides an example of how this can happen.

Whether devolution of school governance can deliver what its authors claim it should is a separate question from whether school devolution policies were developed in a politically sound way. Some critics, such as Cohen (1990), argue that devolution is a response to chronic problems of government, problems of rising operational costs, declining political and customer responsiveness, and public concern with standards. The adoption of devolution strategies, according to Cohen, ensures that schools inherit problems that have not been able to be solved at the centre. The rub, says Cohen, is that schools have even less capacity than the centre for problem solving. Compounding the lack of problem-solving capacity is the political fragmentation that follows devolution. Under devolution the centres of political influence multiply, leading to political fragmentation. Eventually, this situation becomes too burdensome for government. For example, the policy of establishing a decision-making group in every school to overview the school's performance, has formally opened up the school system to hundreds of new political advocacy groups. Previously, local parents' and citizens' councils provided weak political connections between

schools and their parent amenities and had little impact on the educational direction of their schools. In effect, devolution, if taken seriously, challenges the Westminster system of government in which ministers, not principals or presidents of school councils, are finally accountable for mishaps, including the most petty and bizarre (critics would say accountable especially for the petty and bizarre, sometimes to the exclusion of the more pressing and profound policy issues).

A cynical prognosis for devolution is that as long as its adoption provides a control framework that enables government to reduce expenditure on education without producing any obvious deterioration in the quality of education then it will have served its purpose. This would be the case even if the patterns of school organization and the nature of teachers' work do not demonstrably change. In other words, the reforms might be judged to be successful, even if they are implemented principally at the level of rhetoric so that underneath the new language there is little change in practice. This seems to be the outcome of Swedish decentralization reforms of the 1980s (Ahs, 1986; Norrving and Sannerstedt, 1989). Old habits die hard; it is easier to learn a new language than to break established routines and patterns of influence. Even when practice changes sometimes it is directed towards refinement of the means without reference to the ends. It is conceivable that in Australian school systems, considerable effort could be invested in drafting corporate plans, participating in school councils, and writing reports so that they become additional tasks for schools to undertake without any real enhancement of their capacity to improve teaching. But the new control system may enable governments to cap their expenditure on education. No wonder the Schools Commission era seems so halcyon — such optimism, so little cynicism.

A Concluding Note

Perhaps the singularly most famous document on devolution was issued by A. W. Jones, Director-General of South Australia in 1970, motivated by the desire to make schools better places for learning. In his memorandum to schools, entitled 'Freedom and Authority in Schools', Jones states:

> Let me say at the outset that you, as Head of your school, by delegated authority from the Minister and the Director General, are in undisputed control of your school. Within the broad framework of the Education Act, the general curriculum advised by the curriculum boards and approved by me as Director General of Education, and the general policy set by your Division and communicated to you by circular, you have the widest liberty to vary courses, to alter the timetable, to decide the organisation of the school and government within the school, to experiment with

> teaching methods, assessment of student achievement and in extra-curricular activities . . . Grouping, setting, streaming, development of tracks, block time-tabling and ungrading are all acceptable schemes or organisation. Co-operative teaching, team teaching, tutorials, and independent study are all acceptable methods for teaching and learning. . . . Finally, the sooner the old concept of the fixed timetable and the strictly regulated movement as the blue-print of the school day disappears, the better.

The sentiments contained in the memorandum seem prescient of the current turmoil surrounding devolution, yet somehow benign. If only it were so simple so as to create better schools by decree.

Chapter 2

Radical Legislated School Reform in the United States: An Examination of Chicago and Kentucky

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Within recent educational reform history in the United States, the most radical, sweeping, and controversial school reform packages were passed in Illinois for the City of Chicago (December 1 1988) and by the Legislature of the Commonwealth of Kentucky for the Bluegrass State (April 11 1990).

Education in the United States is the peculiar creature of the second tier of a federal system of government in which power in this area is jointly shared between the two levels (federal–state) with the state preeminent since the Puritan's theocratic rule was established in New England in the early 1600s. By the time of the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia, following the Revolutionary War, state control had existed for many years, and was legitimated in the law of the land.

The United States is one of the few remaining Western powers without a centralized Ministry of Education exercising rigid and near total control of things pertaining to primary and secondary education. In addition, interpretations of the Constitution by the United States Supreme Court, have drawn clear lines between the use of public taxes for the support of private parochial (religious) schools and those supporting the public schools.

The peculiar form of political control of education in the United States has made mustering the nation towards any set of objectives mostly a rhetorical call to the governors of the respective states and their legislatures to define and act upon a common agenda. President Bush succeeded in bringing the nation's governors together, but they did little except to agree that education was important and embrace a set of very general objectives. The real control of elementary and secondary education and hence its change or reform, still resides in the states. It is to this level of government that we direct our analysis.

The Common Elements of Political Upheaval in the Nation's Heartland

Illinois and Kentucky occupy places in the strategic heartland of the United States. Their educational problems are similar in that they pertain to: financial inadequacies and discrepancies in funding primary and secondary schooling; a long history of political interference and corruption, or at least entanglement in politics with local, regional and state political machines, and; irrefutable evidence that student achievement, at least by traditional methods of determination, was showing poor results.

The nature of the differences in these reforms was also political. Chicago's centralized political power, as represented in the mayor's office and in a downtown bureaucracy employing over 3,000 administrators, could not be found anywhere in Kentucky. And while Chicago's urban poor were African-Americans and Hispanics, Kentucky's poor were largely rural, Appalachian Whites with a decades-long dependence upon an aging coal mine industry that had become smaller and automated, and a small-mind mentality that had become severely introverted and fed by high school drop-out rates, teenage pregnancy and unemployment. Both states represented long neglected segments of the United States population not being adequately served by their public schools, or for that matter, most other public services.

This analysis will examine Kentucky and Chicago with a common set of criteria: events demographics; events leading to the reform; major components of the reform, what changed and what remained the same; and trouble spots. It will conclude with a policy narrative about what has been learned from both reform sites.

The Chicago School Reform

The City of Chicago dominates the Illinois landscape. Chicago politics have long been national in scope and overshadowed the entire larger state governmental entity.

Chicago Public Schools — One of the Nation's Largest Districts

The Chicago public schools are gargantuan by any standard. The school system is comprised of 610 schools which includes 413 regular elementary, 38 magnet, 21 community academies, 6 middle schools, 7 educational, vocational, and guidance schools, 24 child–parent centres, 68 secondary schools (41 general/technical, 8 vocational, 10 magnet, 6 community academies) and 35 special schools. As of September 28, 1990, there were 303,193 elementary school students, 98,176 high school students, and 7,345 students

in other programs. 58 per cent of the students were African Americans, 27 per cent Hispanic, 12 per cent Asian and Pacific Islander, with 0.2 per cent American Indian or Alaskan native. More than 65 per cent of the students came from low-income families. The Chicago high school graduation rate was a mere 47.4 per cent compared to 78.4 per cent for the State of Illinois. The Chicago public schools educate approximately 25 per cent of all students in the State of Illinois. The system is governed by a fifteen member board appointed by the Mayor of Chicago. The public schools of the City of Chicago employed 45,399 staff of which 23,684 were teachers. The budget for the Chicago Public Schools is $2.2 billion dollars (English, 1992, p. 8).

Teachers' Strike Provides the Catalyst for Reform

The Chicago School Reform Act passed in December of 1988 had its genesis in a devastating city-wide teachers' strike which led to a Mayor's Educational Summit. It was at this meeting that various reform groups within the city, many privately funded by foundations, began to coalesce toward an agenda which was subsequently adopted in Springfield, Illinois by the State Legislature, and became the Chicago School Reform Act.

Reform Package: A Conglomeration of Ideas

The Reform Act was a conglomeration of many ideas, some of which could not be considered reforms at all. They were simply restorations of previous programs or services cut in various budget blood-letting exercises of the city for many years. For example, the Reform Act made it mandatory that competitive school athletics be restored along with journalism, drama, art and music in the curriculum.

The Reform Act embraced a number of conventional reform agendas. Among them:

- Increased testing of student achievement by standardized norm-referenced instruments on basic skills;
- Cutting central administrative costs by placing a 'cap' on such expenditures by using the ratio of such costs to the 'average' of all local school districts for the entire state;
- Improving student attendance, retention and graduate rates;
- Shifting many governance issues to local school units and away from the hegemony of central power;
- Involving parents and teachers in local school decision making councils, and providing them with real 'clout', as for example in hiring, evaluating and dismissing their school principals;

- Shifting the definition of curriculum development to the school level, within a centralized curricular 'framework.'

Reform Attempted Major Shift in Power

What the Chicago School Reform Act attempted to do was to shift some of the political control of the school system away from the central level to the schools. But it was never imagined that such a power shift was ever to be total or absolute, despite the reform rhetoric of many of the privately-funded reform groups in the city. For example, the development of the actual system-wide reform plan, which was to govern the shift in the emphasis of power, was still lodged with the City's Board of Education and not the individual schools. This provision gave the central board an administration power to control what the individual schools proposed. While the individual school curriculum could be developed independently of the system, it still was subject to both system and state review by the testing programs of both.

The Reform Act had to abide by the existing Labor Union contractual guidelines. This stricture effectively cancelled out radical teacher staffing patterns or shifting of teacher work loads in flexibly scheduled schools, irrespective of whether such initiatives were advanced by the administration or by teacher groups themselves.

The creation of local school councils with real hiring and firing power was nullified when approximately fifty fired Chicago principals took their case to the Illinois Supreme Court and won their jobs back on the grounds that the composition of their school site councils violated a US Supreme Court ruling called 'one person, one vote.' Essentially, the Illinois Supreme Court conceded that the composition of the Chicago school site councils of ten member panels violated the basis of all free elections, i.e., that no one person would be entitled by virtue of position to more representation than one vote. Because the ten member councils were comprised of six parents of students enrolled in the schools, two representatives of citizens and two teachers, parents had much more weight than either citizens or teachers, i.e., six votes compared to two for citizens or teachers. Thus, the Illinois Supreme Court voided the firing of the school principals (DeMitchell, 1992). The Chicago Central Board of Education, which had no say in the release of the principals, was thus liable for damages and back pay for them.

Chicago School Finance Authority Monitors Reform

The monitoring of reform in the city was bestowed on the Chicago School Finance Authority, an independent fiduciary body of five persons jointly

appointed by the Governor of Illinois and the Mayor of the City of Chicago. The Finance Authority's role was to protect the fiscal integrity of the system. In the Reform Act it was given a monitoring role for the overall reform efforts as well as the power to conduct independent investigations of any aspect of school operations. However, the Authority's powers stopped short of actual takeover of the schools, or of becoming involved in the day-to-day administration of them.

Chicago Reform on the Rocks

Chicago school reform was foundering badly in late 1992 on several deeply rooted issues. These were the inability of:

- the school system to extricate itself from a projected revenue shortfall of $175 million in 1992, which was expected to reach $540 million by 1996;
- the school system to adequately decentralize support services, funds, materials to the 610 schools to enable them to be responsive to emerging local conditions;
- local school councils to deal with educational as opposed to governance issues in the schools;
- the school system to improve educational achievement of its 400,000 students;
- any external group to find a leverage point to speed up change in a system as large as Chicago's.

These are reviewed separately below.

The financial morass of the Chicago public schools

A study by Booz and Hamilton Inc. (1992), prepared for the Civic Committee of The Commercial Club of Chicago, predicted that over the next five years, the revenue to support the educational system was projected to increase by 2.7 per cent, while costs were expected to increase by 6.8 per cent. The major contributories to this shortfall were the 7 per cent salary increases given to the teachers, the transfer of federal monies to the individual schools and their site councils out of the general fund controlled by the central board, and the lapse of an agreement which allowed the central board to use teacher pension funds to cover costs in the general operating fund and which had to be made up.

These budgetary dilemmas were indicative of the political atmosphere in the City of Chicago in which the future was bankrolled into today's budget to 'get by.' By mortgaging the future, the City's revenue shortfalls became a nightmare when they became due. Chicago school reform always teetered on the verge of collapse because of the City's

precarious finances, and the short-sighted methods it used to pay for city services. The Chicago Teachers' Union has always been a 'big time' back room player, quietly making deals that protected its membership and their salaries.

The brick wall: real decentralization of administrative power

Reform in Chicago met a brick wall in March of 1992 when the Chicago School Finance Authority voted down the 'best reform plan' it had ever seen by the Chicago Board of Education on the grounds that the board did not adequately deal with what it called 'substantive decentralization' of the administrative control of schools. The Authority conceded that there had been a decrease in the number of administrators at the central level caused by attrition and retirement and that funds had been shifted to the schools. 'But there is no grand plan. There is no vision for the substantive decentralization of the school system' (Chicago School Finance Authority, 1992, p. 9).

A study completed by the North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) of the Chicago school reform in 1992 found that of twenty-one central level department heads interviewed, only seven could indicate that relationships with the schools had changed, and several noted such changes were minor (Quinn, Stewart and Nowakowski, 1993, p. 8). The lack of real decentralization, of major concern to the School Finance Authority, was confirmed by NCREL external evaluation.

Local school councils fail to deal with instructional issues

Chicago's school councils, the only major success story in the Chicago school reform, singularly failed to deal with educational issues by the time the NCREL Evaluation Study was performed in 1992 (Quinn, Stewart and Nowakowski, 1993). Elections to school councils for some 5,420 seats resulted in 313,000 votes being cast (DeMitchell, 1992, p. 69).

School councils were concerned with dress codes, climates, rules and procedures, and not very concerned about instructional issues in the schools. Few councils had dealt with substantive issues of instruction across the city's schools (see Hess, 1992, p. 275).

The academic achievement of Chicago's students has not improved

No evaluation to date has indicated that basic academic performance of the system's students has been improved as a result of the reform efforts. The mid-point NCREL study cast doubt that the system's indicators themselves were even valid, and furthermore that the school improvement plans submitted by each school council were not powerful tools for improving instruction in the schools (Quinn, Stewart and Nowakowski, 1993, p. 6). Given the existing trends it does not appear that Chicago school reform will impact student learning.

The inability of any external group to leverage change

Many reform groups dot the political landscape in Chicago and have been active in lobbying for changes from the central board and the state legislature in Springfield. To date, no group or combinations of groups, have found any success in leveraging their power to foster change or accelerate the pace of change in the system. Even the Chicago School Finance Authority found itself stonewalled by the recalcitrance of the central board in engaging in substantive decentralization.

The 1992 NCREL external evaluation of the Chicago school reform indicated that if the trajectory did not change, it was highly unlikely the 'student outcome and system performance goals of the Reform Act will be achieved by the 1994 target date' (Quinn, Stewart and Nowakowski, 1993, p. 11).

The Kentucky Educational Reform

While there are some similarities in the reforms of Chicago and Kentucky, there are also many differences. The similarities include the reliance on school-based decision making as a vehicle for change, the tension created between the school site and the local board, the political environment in which the schools operate, the fact that the reform was legislated, the comparable demographics of the two, and the formation of an outside body to monitor the implementation of the reform.

Two of the most striking differences are the fact that the Chicago reform was not supported with any new state money, whereas the Kentucky reform resulted in a 34.8 per cent increase in state and local revenue during the first two years of implementation (Office of Education Accountability, 1992); and the Chicago reform was a conglomerate of unrelated programs, whereas the Kentucky reform was a holistic, integrated effort to restructure the system.

Kentucky School System Declared Unconstitutional

In spite of the result of a state supreme court decision declaring the entire educational system unconstitutional, Kentucky still remains this country's most comprehensive, mandated and funded state educational reform. Younger than the Chicago school reform by more than a year, Kentucky's efforts appear to be teetering on a mountain top with one side leading to student attainment of what the state department describes as international standards, and a new place in the 'educational sun' for Kentucky. The other side of the mountain leads to frustration, loss of public confidence and a return to the 'same old political, school game' played for years in the Bluegrass State.

Chicago and Kentucky Share Similar Characteristics

On September 30, 1990, approximately 647,000 students were enrolled, K-12, in Kentucky's 1362 public schools (Biennial Report, 1989–91). The state has 176 school districts ranging in size from approximately 80,300 to 185 pupils (Public Schools Financial Analysis, 1990–91). Forty of the districts in the State have a student population of less than 1,000. Of the 176 districts, 144 have fewer than 4,000 students. These districts employ 42,000 certified staff and 29,000 non-certified staff. The 1990–91 school budget for the State including local, state, and federal revenues was $2.7 billion. Each school district is governed by a five member local board of directors, elected by the voters to four-year terms (Kentucky School Law, 1990). With Chicago's budget of $2.2 billion and Kentucky's of $2.7 billion, it appears that Kentucky educates 250,000 more students and employs 14,000 more teachers. Recent statistics released by the State Department show that of 100 children entering 1st grade in 1975, only 63 completed high school (*Kentucky Teacher*, 1992).

Equity Suit Catalyst for Kentucky Reform

In 1985, sixty-six school districts, seven school boards, and twenty-two students filed a class-action equity suit against the Governor, the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Treasurer, the President pro-tem of the State Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and all members of the State Board of Education, stating that the state system for funding public education was in violation of the state constitution (Miller, Nolan and Schaaf, 1991). In October 1988, Judge Ray Corns issued a judgment stating that the General Assembly had failed in its constitutional obligation to provide an efficient system of schools and further stated that the system for financing schools was 'inefficient'. The case was appealed to the Kentucky Supreme Court and in June 1989, the high court declared the entire educational system of the state unconstitutional. The high court held the General Assembly responsible for creating a new, efficient system of public education.

Working under severe time constraints, a twenty-two member Task Force on Educational Reform composed of representatives from the General Assembly and the Governor's office was formed. The final report of the task force was approved on March 7, 1990, quickly turned into legislation, and signed into law on April 11, 1990. This legislation resulted in the largest tax increase the state had ever experienced.

Kentucky Reform Integrated Programatically

Unlike the Chicago reform, which tended to be an amalgamation of a number of unrelated programs, the Kentucky Education Reform Act

(KERA) is an integrated, comprehensive program intended to produce change in the areas of curriculum, finance and governance. Substantive state policy changes occurred in five interrelated areas (Steffy, 1993).

1 First, the system moved from an 'inputs' system to an 'outputs' system. An 'inputs' system measures success by determining the resources, time, and effort infused *into* the system, i.e., the number of books in the school library, the number of minutes of instruction, the number of courses taken. Student success in an 'outputs' system is based on demonstrated student achievement. Additionally, the school became the unit of measure in addition to the district. This policy shift for determining 'success' from district to school and 'inputs', to student achievement 'outputs' has created high levels of anxiety and heightened pressure on local schools to make significant changes.

2 The second policy change was in the area of curriculum and assessment. Before KERA the state measured student achievement by administering the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, a standardized achievement test. The state curriculum, called the *Program of Studies*, consisted of a listing of course titles, a description of course content, and a specification of teacher certification requirements for teaching each of the courses; all of which are 'input' measures. Since KERA was enacted, the State has developed a list of seventy-five 'valued outcomes' describing what students should know and be able to do in order to graduate from high school. To measure student attainment of the 'valued outcomes,' the state is developing a comprehensive, authentic, student assessment program which includes portfolio reviews, performance events, and open-ended, essay-type questions. Portfolios are being developed in the areas of language, arts, and mathematics. Portfolio requirements for science and social studies will be added during the 1993–94 school year. Performance events, in the areas of mathematics, science, social studies, arts and humanities, practical living and vocational education generally require students working in small groups and individually to solve problems. The open-ended essay questions require individual responses to problem situations in mathematics, reading, science and social studies. Students are assessed at grades 4, 8 and 12. In developing the scoring mechanisms for these new assessments, the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education made many policy decisions related to assessment scoring. The entire new educational system is based on the principle that *all* children can learn at high levels.

3 The third major policy change was related to the governance structure of districts. Policy setting responsibility and accountability, in major curriculum areas, was shifted from the local school

board to individual schools through the formation of school councils. The law mandates that each school in the state must form a school council by June 1996. School councils are composed of three teachers, two parents and the building principal. School councils have policy setting power in the following areas: choosing curriculum content, selecting instructional materials, developing school discipline codes, deciding how to use school time, selecting extracurricular activities for the school and deciding how students will be placed in classes. In addition the school council must be involved in the selection of staff. If the school is selecting a new principal, the superintendent must supply the school council with a list of qualified candidates, the school council selects the candidate and informs the superintendent of the choice. The superintendent may not override the decision of the council. While school councils must operate within the boundaries of local district policy, for the areas prescribed by KERA, the local board may not reverse the decision of the council. Local school boards have argued through the court system that the locally elected board should have the final say over policy decisions in the district. To date, the courts have not upheld this position even though the local board is the legal accountable body. The state's two largest districts, Jefferson County with over 80,000 students and Fayette County with over 28,000 students, had local school decision-making models in place prior to the passage of KERA. Since the state board has refused to acknowledge alternate models for membership to councils, the number of approved councils in these two districts is small. Currently, the state has approximately 600 operational school councils.

4 In addition to the changes in curriculum, assessment, and school-based decision making, KERA provided for the development of five major programmatic initiatives. Interagency, collaborative centres are being established to bring about the closer coordination of social services agencies and educational agencies in schools where more than 20 per cent of the student populations qualify for one of these centres (currently, approximately 1,000 of the state's schools). KERA provided for the development of a half-day preschool program for children who qualify for free lunch or who are disabled. This program is designed to provide students with readiness and socialization skills to enhance their opportunity to be 'successful' students. A new primary program was established to replace the K–3 graded system. This program provides a failure-free learning environment for students during the first four years of public school. A portfolio review process will be used at the end of the primary program to assess when a student is ready to enter 4th grade. Extra funds to extend the school day and provide

summer school experiences are also available. KERA also provides funds to develop a state-wide instructional and administrative technology program. All of these programmatic initiatives are seen as support for enabling students to demonstrate what they know and are able to do by scoring at the proficient level on the state assessment system.

5 The final major policy area addressed in KERA is school and district accountability. KERA mandates a system of sanctions and rewards applied at the school and district level which is connected to the state assessment system. Each school was given a baseline score based on both cognitive and non-cognitive indicators. The cognitive indicators came from the new authentic assessment system and the non-cognitive indicators included drop-out rate, student attendance, retention, and successful transition from high school to the world of work, college, or the military.

Increased State and Local Funds Support Reform

In 1989–90, the year before KERA, combined state and local revenue supporting education in the state was approximately $2.0 billion. By 1991–92 the amount had grown to $2.76 billion, a 34.8 per cent increase (Office of Education Accountability, 1992). The increased funds were the result of a new state education funding formula designed to reduce the gap between the amount of money per pupil in property rich and property poor districts in the state, and substantial new local taxes. During the first two years of the reform 119 of the 176 districts in the state enjoyed combined state and local revenue increases of more than 30 per cent (pp. 231–235).

Formation of School Councils Off to a Slow Start

A local school may form a school council when two-thirds of the school faculty vote in favor of the concept. Three years after passage of the Bill, less than half of the schools in the state have voted to form them. All school districts were required to have one school council in place by June 1991. In forty districts the required two-thirds vote was not attained and the local school board had to appoint one school to form a council.

Legislators, responding to teacher demands that they be more involved in the decision making of local schools, have expressed disappointment with the slow implementation of this component of KERA. Teachers have been reluctant to take on this new responsibility since they receive no additional reimbursement for the additional work; the work has to be done after the regular school day, and most feel they are not trained adequately to handle these duties which many feel are the responsibility of

the building principal. To date, there are no data to suggest that there is a relationship between a school council and increased student achievement.

New Primary Program has Frustrated Many Elementary Teachers

Teacher frustration and anxiety is on the increase as the state moves towards a mandated implementation date for the multi-age, multi-ability grouped primary program. Critical attributes of this program require primary teachers to create a success-oriented learning environment for children aged between 5 and 8. While individual schools are permitted to design their own models for implementing this program; each primary teacher must use developmentally appropriate practices, create a learning environment which meets the varied instructional needs of *all* students, and develop stronger partnerships with parents, community, and other professionals in the school. Since the State currently operates a half-day kindergarten program, integrating this program into the day-long activities of 6–8-year-old children has created open hostility to the program by teachers.

State Education Department Loses Credibility with Field

KERA called for the complete restructuring of the Kentucky Department of Education in June, 1991, and the hiring of a new, appointed Commissioner of Education (Steffy, 1992). The new Commissioner reorganized the department and hired many new people to fill top positions. During the past two years the reorganization of the department has continued as job descriptions have changed and people resigned. The changes have been so comprehensive that it is currently difficult for local school administrators to know who to contact in the state department to answer programmatic questions.

Office of Education Accountability Acts as 'Watchdog'

Established by the reform, the Office of Education Accountability is an arm of the legislature. The duties of this office include monitoring the activities of the Commissioner of Education, the Department of Education, the State Board for Elementary and Secondary Education, the Council for Higher Education, and the operations of local school districts. Acting in this capacity, the Office has been responsible for conducting investigations which have led to the removal of three school board members, and at least two local superintendents. Described by the executive director as

a 'watchdog agency,' the Office employs a staff of experienced lawyers and accountants and persons previously employed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Central Intelligence Agency. The office reports directly to the leadership of the legislature and has no executive power, only investigative power. The State Board acts on the recommendation of the Office.

All Schools Receive Improvement Targets

In 1992 students in grades 4, 8 and 12 were assessed using the new State Authentic Assessment System. Results from the assessment are being used to establish school baseline scores and improvement targets for 1994. Schools exceeding these targets by more than 1 per cent will qualify for financial rewards. Schools failing to meet the targets will be required to plan improvement efforts. If a school falls below its baseline score it will be assigned a state department employee, called a distinguished educator, who will remain on-site in the school for two years to assist school personnel with the development and implementation of school improvement efforts. Schools falling more than 5 per cent below the baseline score face strong State intervention which could include the loss of tenured positions. Schools initially received baseline scores and targets in January, 1992. Since then, there has been a renewed interest in developing local district curriculum aligned with the new state assessment system.

The Lessons to be Learned About School Reform

The cases of the Chicago and Kentucky school reforms present some interesting lessons to be learned about impacting change on a grand scale. Some of these appear to be:

1 *Decentralization requires centralization of power to carry it out and results in further centralization.*

In a strange ironic twist, to decentralize power to the schools requires centralized power to accomplish and retain the shift. Both Chicago and Kentucky point out that to move power away from localized sites requires a higher, centralized base which resides at the state level. Thus, as the state acts to move power to the schools and away from local boards and their respective administrative centers, it is simultaneously expanding its own power base to attain the objective and to enhance it further through monitoring such changes.

This is a strange kind of earthquake fault activity where one land mass moves one way and the one on the other side of the fault moves in

the opposite direction to produce the quake. Naive reform watchers only observe the power in local systems shift to the schools. What they often miss is the subsequent power shift to the state on the other side of the fault. In the US, the inevitable shift of power to higher centralized authority has continued unabated, at least, since the early 1960's accountability movements.

2 *Reforms that centre on governance may have little to do with educational improvements.*

Simply decentralizing power to the schools does not insure that it will be used to improve instruction in them. Governance changes can occur separately from those centring on improving teaching and learning. It should have been obvious, but it was not to lay reformers, that the so-called 'natural' alliance between parents and teachers comes bitterly to an end the moment parents want to fire the bad teachers, or deal with making judgments until now reserved exclusively to professionals about evaluating teaching performance. Teacher unions in the US are already having second thoughts about these areas, as well as becoming concerned that contract enforcement depends upon central, not localized, authority. The assumed relationship between democratizing educational governance and the competence to deal with complex educational issues are neither correlative nor predictive in isolation. The power to make decisions is independent of the competence to understand the issues involved in improving the situation. Empowerment does not by itself ensure virtue or expertise. Involvement and improvement are not synonymous in educational reform.

3 *Highly rational approaches to reform reinforce bureaucracy rather than serve to de-bureaucratize educational systems.*

Reforms that are defined and driven by highly rationalistic forms requiring elaborate plans coupled to goals and objectives represent hyper-rationalization of the power of the bureaucracy to feed upon such activities (Wise, 1979).

Bureaucracies require an elaborate division of labor rooted in legal authority, with the assumption that the bureaucratic form must match the functions required in reform itself. The more reform activities are presumptively rational (relating goals to activities or functions) the more supportive they are of the maintenance of the essential core of the bureaucratic paradigm. Thus, while educational reform is offered as an antidote to bureaucracy, such reforms have a long history of reinforcing the villain they were designed to drive from the scene. This criticism of US reform dates back to the initiatives designed and fostered by Horace Mann and others (Katz, 1968).

The idea that educational systems are not rational at all has been advanced by Palumbo (1985) who avers that such organizations engage in a 'retrospective rationality' that works backwards rather than forwards, i.e., goals and objectives are created to link back to the bureaucracy to make them appear as rational or related. It does make sense that legislated reform makes use of bureaucracies to regulate change, and therefore reform that would not be capable of being monitored by such organizations would not be created. This would be a case where the objectives of reform must be capable of being implemented by organizations which are essentially anti-reform themselves, and where functions are shaped by the institutions which must carry them out.

4 *The reformers benefit most from the reforms they advocate.*

Those pushing educational reforms usually have an agenda in which they, or their organizations, directly or indirectly benefit from the changes they advocate. Thus, there are few truly 'neutral' observers in the reform scenario.

If the state is advancing educational reform, the chances are quite good the state will gain from the reform agenda implementation, i.e., its power, privilege and influence will be expanded in educational affairs. The reform business is a sticky affair comprised only of partisans not philosophers.

5 *Power used is power expanded.*

Both national political parties have advocated changes which are most likely to result in ultimate federal control and direction of education in the United States. The trend lines are unmistakable. This may not be a bad thing, but it is certainly a different thing than that envisaged by the Founding Fathers of the Republic. Once a truly national exam is in place and state financing formulas are revealed as redressing fundamental inequities between the wealthy and poor states, the legal groundwork will have been laid for the establishment of the federal interest in education that becomes completely regulatory. In that case the reform mantle will have been passed from the respective states to the nation.

Chapter 3

Texas Educational Reform: Why? Why not? Who? What? and So What?

Sandra Neubert

On August 26, 1981, the US Department of Education created the National Commission on Excellence in Education. The Commission, chaired by David Pierpont Gardner, President of the University of Utah, was charged to help define problems afflicting American education and to provide solutions, not scapegoats, for those problems. The conclusions of the Commission are succinctly stated in the title of the report published in 1983, *A Nation at Risk: Imperative for Change*.

Why? Forces Propelling Change — A Nation at Risk

A Nation at Risk: Catalyst for Change

The report began with the statement, 'Our nation is at risk. Our once unchallenged pre-eminence in commerce, industry, science, and technological innovation is being overtaken by competitors throughout the world' (p. 2). The report was critical of many aspects of America's educational system and cited numerous indicators of its dire state including the decline of student achievement, a high level of functional illiteracy and the decline of higher order intellectual skills. Specifically, the report stated that approximately 13 per cent of all 17-year-olds in America were functionally illiterate and, among minority youth, the illiteracy rate might approach 40 per cent. In addition, scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) consistently declined form 1963 to 1980. Over that seventeen-year period, average SAT verbal scores decreased by over 50 points, and average SAT mathematics scores decreased by almost 40 points.

A Nation at Risk spread the responsibility for the decline in quality education to several aspects of the educational system including the content of education, levels of expectation for students, inappropriate use of time in the educational setting, unsatisfactory teacher training, and ineffective teaching strategies. The report recommended that the quality of

teaching and learning be improved by taking numerous actions such as raising admission standards at teacher training institutions, raising teachers' salaries, adopting eleven-month contracts for teachers, using career ladders to reward teacher excellence, employing non-certified personnel for shortages, providing loans and grants for qualified students who wished to enter teacher training programs, and introducing the position of master teachers.

A Nation at Risk shocked the educational community and catapulted many states into an reform frenzy. In fact, Timar (1989) reports that from 1983 to 1989, states generated more rules and regulations than in the previous 20 years. For example, during that time, enacted statutes affecting some aspect of the teaching profession alone numbered more than 700. Odden and Doughterty (1984) report that in 1983 alone, states created no less than 250 new education task forces that were charged to develop reform programmes and twenty-four states had enacted major education reforms as a reaction to the nation-wide criticism of public schools. The reforms addressed issues critical to teachers and those that directly impacted students. For example, Cetron and Gayle (1991) report that since *A Nation At Risk* was published, all but five states have revised their secondary curricula and increased graduation requirements.

Why Not? Texas Forces Impeding Change

Demographics and Diversity

To demonstrate its desire to be in the forefront of the reform movement, the 1983 Texas State Board of Education published *A State In Motion in the Midst of a Nation at Risk* (Parr, 1991). The desires of the Texas State Board of Education and the realities of enacting educational reform in Texas, however, were destined to clash.

Extensive reform, as recommended by *A Nation At Risk*, would be difficult in any setting; however, Texas has its unique set of obstacles to institutionalized change. The demographics of the state and the governance structure of the public school system are inherent barriers to systematic change. According to the *Information Please Almanac* (1993), Texas spans 266,806 square miles, which is roughly comparable to the combined countries of Great Britain, Ireland, and Germany. The Texas terrain ranges from remote semi-arid deserts to lushly vegetated hills with numerous lakes, rivers, and streams. In addition, much of Texas represents everything else between deserts and hilly terrain. Although the state boasts two of the nation's ten largest cities (Houston and Dallas), much of the state is rural (1983 *Texas Almanac*).

Texas public schools are comprised of 1,053 school districts serving 3.4 million students and employing approximately 400,000 personnel (Texas

Education Agency, 1992b). Each school district is governed by a locally elected board of trustees varying in number from three to nine which is dependent on the number of students enrolled in the school district (Texas Education Code, 1992a). In some districts, school board members are elected at large; in others, elections are held by single member districts.

The 1,053 districts are extremely diverse. The smallest public school district has two students and the largest has approximately 194,000 students. Six districts enrol 17 per cent of all the students in the state. Conversely, 393 or almost 40 per cent of all districts serve only 3 per cent of all students in Texas (Texas Education Agency, 1992b). Specifically, 58 per cent of Texas school districts have less than 1,000 students, or 8 per cent of all Texas students. On the other hand, 0.6 per cent of the school districts have from 50,000–194,000 students, or 18 per cent of all Texas students. Overall, most Texas students attend school in an urban or suburban setting and only about 20 per cent of Texas students attend school in a rural or non-metropolitan district (Texas Education Agency 1991c). It should be noted, however, that while 58 per cent of Texas schools have only 8 per cent of all Texas students, they comprise 58 per cent of the school superintendents and 58 per cent of the locally elected school boards. As a consequence, even though the rural schools represent few students, the numbers of rural school superintendents and school board members comprise a majority of Texas superintendents and school board members. Accordingly, they represent an influential political factor in the determination of state-wide educational initiatives.

Additional demographic factors that impact student learning need also add to the diversity of Texas public schools. Among those are wide variations across the state in median family income, property values, proximity to urban area, and proportions of minority populations. Not surprisingly then, Texas public schools also vary greatly in the size of their budgets. Yearly operating expenditures range from $35,000 in a small district than more than $675 million in a large district (Texas Education Agency, 1991c).

It also logically follows that the diversity of Texas public schools would reflect the diverse demographics of the state. The minority population in Texas has grown significantly in recent years. The Texas Education Agency (1993a) reports that Anglos comprise 49 per cent of the students enrolled in Texas schools. The Hispanic enrolment rate is increasing twice as fast as the Anglo rate and will account for half the projected increase in students during the 1990s. Along with the rising numbers of minority children in Texas, are rising numbers of children living in poverty. The Texas Education Agency (1989b) reports that the poverty rate among Texas children rose from 19 per cent in 1980 to 23 per cent in 1987. Furthermore, the 43 per cent of all low-income children in Texas are Hispanic; 42 per cent are African-American; 10 per cent are Anglo and the remaining 5 per cent are Asian or Native American.

Traditional and Community Values

Not only is the state diverse in its population and school organizations, the school districts are fiercely independent. In fact, the term 'independent,' is included in the name of each district, reflecting the historically strong allegiance of Texas public school districts to local control. The roots of this allegiance extend to the very beginnings of public schools in Texas and are deeply embedded in the cultural values of local communities.

Perhaps a formal beginning to establishment of public schools in Texas was the creation of the Permanent School Fund. The fund was established in 1854 from a $10 million indemnity paid to Texas by the United States Government to settle the dispute over the boundaries of the state. Interest from the indemnity was used to establish a state school fund and to initiate a state-wide school system. Subsequent legislation, the School Law of 1876, established community schools that could be initiated by virtually anyone associated with a minor. The community school organization allowed a maximum of local control and according to Rowold and Sitton (1987), the battle between school reformers who decried the shortcomings of local control and local communities who fiercely protected their right to educate their children locally, began. The controversy continued throughout the 1900s and eventually resulted in a massive consolidation of small rural schools despite the resistance of local communities. The local communities resisted consolidation for two primary reasons. First, they feared that their community would disappear without a school. Secondly, the community valued local control and a distrusted state-wide legislative initiatives (Rowold and Sitton, 1987).

Regardless of the resistance from rural areas however in the first half of the twentieth century, Walker (1988) reports that the number of school districts in Texas significantly decreased. For example, in 1900, Texas had 11,460 school districts. The number of districts declined steadily to 8,599 in 1910; 7,459 by 1930; and 6,409 in 1940. In 1949, the Texas legislature passed the Gilmer-Akin Law which resulted in a dramatic decrease of schools from 4,474 to 2,748 in one year, and Walker (1988) indicates this was due primarily to the annexation of all dormant school districts. By 1974, there were about 1,100 school districts. Even though the Gilmer-Akin Law resulted in massive consolidation, it prohibited the State Board of Education and the Commissioner of Education from making any rule that would result in the consolidation of schools apart from legislative mandate. Thus, even though the number of local school districts were dramatically reduced in this period of time, the value attached to preserving local schools was prevalent in the legislation (Walker, 1988).

Debate regarding the local versus centralized control has not abated in Texas or on the national front. Advocates for local control and site-based decision making abound (Amudson, 1988; Barth, 1990; Candoli, 1991; Goodlad, 1987; and Mitchell, 1990). However, Pipho (1989) concludes

that the prospects of improving education through local control are dismal even though the concept of local control is probably less flawed than are the people charged with operating the schools. Kierstead and Mentor (1988) conclude that implementation of state developed initiatives at the local campus level require that administrators and teachers develop ownership and enthusiasm for the initiative to ensure meaningful implementation. Centralized control, however, impedes the development of ownership and enthusiasm.

The mood of the reformers of the 1980s, however, was anything but conducive to local control and site-based decision making. According to Brandt (1984) governors, legislators, and state officials were unwilling to wait any longer for local districts to engineer school improvement. They demanded action not only for the improvement of schools but also for their own improved chances for re-election.

Political and Economic Forces

Granted then, Texas is big; Texas is diverse; and, the school districts are staunchly independent — all of which represent obstacles to top–down legislative reform. The fact was, however, that the political climate of the United States in the 1980s called for massive educational reform. So, what were the economic and political forces in Texas that initiated the 1980s educational reform? On the political scene, Governor Mark White was elected in November, 1982. At the time of his election, the Texas economy was still thriving. Shortly thereafter, however, the state's economy plummeted. Historically, farming and the oil industry had provided abundant jobs for Texans; however, technological advances and global economic events greatly impacted these industries in the 1980s. For example, between 1982 and 1987, agricultural jobs dropped 26 per cent (Texas Education Agency, 1991c). In addition, the price of oil dropped from $24 a barrel to $15 a barrel during that same time (Education Commission of the States, 1988). Simultaneously, employment in oil and gas production fell over 40 per cent (Texas Education Agency 1988).

Who? Key Players in Texas Educational Reform

State Political Leaders

Texas Governor Mark White was elected with the support of teachers and had pledged to legislate an increase in state-wide teacher salaries, a feat that seemed feasible at election time. But the 1983 legislature, faced with unexpected declining revenues, an eroding state economy, and extensive disagreement among state leadership, was unable to pass increased teacher

salaries without a tax increase. More specifically, Coffey (1987) reports that from February through April 1983 the legislature had three separate revenue reductions of $1 billion each, and according to one key player in the legislative efforts, 'So basically in '83 we punted and created the select committee with the idea of it being a road show to stir up public understanding and interest and support' (Coffey, 1987, p. 169). Another key player commented. 'When we decided that we were not going to pass the bill, the traditional legislative response of how you deal with a controversial issue when you don't want to do it right away is you create a committee. But yes, we did want an outcome. It was delaying because we didn't have the where with all to do it and it was delaying to help set up a mechanism to help create that where with all to do — to create that sense of public support' (Coffey, 1987, p. 170).

Select Committee on Public Education

Just as the key player predicted, a committee to handle an extremely difficult situation was indeed appointed. The Select Committee on Public Education (SCOPE) was commissioned for a year-long study of the financing of public schools in Texas, to make recommendations for reform of the system. Those recommendations were to be considered in a special legislative session in 1984. Unique among study groups was the membership of the committee. The most powerful persons in the legislative body were active voting members of SCOPE including the Governor, Lt Governor, Speaker of the House, Comptroller and Chairman of both the Senate and House Education Committees. According to one key player '. . . the true miracle was that everybody was together on it — not in every session do you have the Lt Governor, the Governor, the Speaker, and the Chairman of both the Senate and House Education Committees saying "We are going to do this". They always have their own ideas on things' (Coffey, 1987, p. 277). Additional SCOPE members included five members appointed by the Governor, four members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor, four appointees by the speaker, the Chairman, Joe Kelly Butler, of the State Board of Education, and two members appointed by the Chairman.

The SCOPE was chaired by H. Ross Perot, a well-known Dallas billionaire who built his fortune as a computer entrepreneur. Mr Perot was the driving force behind SCOPE and the subsequent passage of House Bill (HB) 72 which embodied many of the committee's recommendations. He was an enthusiastic leader and according to the Lt Governor, 'I believe a lot of groups would have come up with those recommendations, but no one could have sold it like Perot' (Coffey, 1987, p. 199). Mr Perot's major concerns were low student achievement, failure of schools to uphold high standards, disproportionate time spent on problem students, extra-

curricular activities that disrupt and dominate schools, proliferation of non-academic activities during the school day, poor quality teacher, and the rampant use of social promotion.

The SCOPE considered these and other educational issues including funding, student discipline and standards, reform of vocational education, development of pre-kindergarten, and technology education. The final SCOPE report not only reflected numerous recommendations of *A Nation at Risk*, but also other recommendations that went far beyond the scope of *A Nation At Risk*. In the summer of 1984, a thirty day special legislative session was called to deal with educational reform. During that session HB 72 was passed which incorporated some but not all of the SCOPE recommendations. The Bill was more than twenty pages in length and had an impact on Texas public schools in almost every aspect. Generally, the major reforms fell into three areas.

What? Major Components in House Bill 72

School Finance

First, and perhaps the most crucial driving force for HB 72, was the inequitable school finance structure of Texas. Not surprisingly then, the equity issue emerged as a strong component of the legislation. Texas had long been under court pressure to address the equity issue beginning with the 1971 Rodriquez v. San Antonio case and continuing with the subsequent Serrano v. Priest and Edgewood v. Bynum cases. House Bill 72 intended to address the equity issue by increasing state funds to poor districts and reducing aid to wealthy districts. Specifically, Walker and Kirby (1988) state that legislation altered the state system of distribution of funds from a weighted personnel unit approach to a weighted pupil (ADA) method. An overall increase in state aid of approximately 20 per cent was granted, with an emphasis on equalization features such as:

- increased local fund assignment rate which is a state-wide local share of the foundation school program of 30 per cent;
- increased equalization aid for property-poor school district which included an effort factor; and
- elimination of old harmless provisions in local share computation.

Other factors impacting revenues included a salary increase and a career ladder system for teachers. Other mandated programs also strongly impacted financial issues including:

- pre-kindergarten classes for disadvantaged 4-year-olds;
- class size maximums of 22 in grades K-2 (beginning in 1985–87) and grades 3–4 (beginning in 1988–89); and

- movement of some Texas Teacher Retirement System contributions from state responsibility to local responsibility.

In addition, the funding formulas of special programs, including compensatory education, bilingual education, and special education for handicapped children was also significantly revised (Walker and Kirby, 1988).

Quality of Teachers

Secondly, HB 72 addressed reforms intended to improve the quality of teachers. Those issues included; salary increases, establishment of a career ladder, a required competency exam; and state-funded college loan programs for prospective teachers. Of those issues, the career ladder and the required competency examination generated considerable controversy and opposition within the Texas educational community.

That low teacher salaries was an issue is of no great surprise as, historically, Texas has had a poor track record for adequate teacher salaries. The SCOPE strongly supported increased teacher salaries; however, a strong consideration also had to be made of declining revenues and the strong resistance to inevitable tax increase that a teacher salary raise would require. The legislature's position was quite clear. There would be no salary increase without justification, for any increase in teacher salaries would result in a tax increase. The SCOPE then recommended both an across-the-board pay raise and a merit pay plan, or career ladder. The committee would not, however, endorse a salary increase or career ladder without a competency exam for teachers (Coffey, 1987). Accordingly, the legislation required that every Texas teacher, regardless of the permanent or lifetime status of their teacher certificates, be required to pass the Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers (TECAT) prior to 1986 in order to remain certified. Because numerous administrative and support personnel certificates also require teaching certificates, the testing extended past the teacher ranks and included superintendents, central office administrators, and campus principals. The TECAT was a paper and pencil test in basic language skills, knowledge of pedagogy, and a writing sample and educators were given two opportunities to pass the test. According to a study conducted by the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs (1993), about 1,900 teachers failed the TECAT twice and consequently lost their credentials and their jobs in 1986. In addition, an estimated 4,000 teachers did not take the TECAT, did not retire, and were not employed the following school year.

Additional testing for teacher candidates was also mandated by HB 72. The Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) requires teacher candidates to pass basic skills tests in reading, writing, and mathematics in order to be admitted to teacher education programs. In addition, prior to receiving

certification from the Texas Education Agency, a passing score on the Examination for Certification of Educators of Texas (ExCET) is required for all teachers who have completed a teacher education programs. Teachers and administrators who are seeking additional certification credentials must also pass the ExCET that is designed to assess the educator's knowledge of the new certification area (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1993).

In addition to testing, teachers were also strongly impacted by the implementation of a career ladder. House Bill 72 required the development of a uniform system to evaluate teachers. The Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) was developed to appraise teacher performance based on observable job-related behaviors. The TTAS results then, are used to advance teachers on the career ladder and to identify their professional development needs. Development of the TTAS began in 1984. The system was pilot tested in 1985–86 and was fully implemented in 1986–87. The State Board of Education set five standards for performance scores, i.e., unsatisfactory, below expectations, meets expectations, exceeds expectations and clearly outstanding (Texas Education Agency, 1993c). The TTAS procedures require at least two appraisers for each appraisal period. Each appraiser must satisfactorily complete state-mandated training which is comprised of 40 hours in Instructional Leadership and 40 hours in training to uniformly apply the appraisal instrument. Under the TTAS, teachers must attend annual teacher orientation, the observation process, and conferences with supervisors. The conferences are intended to provide teachers with the opportunity for response to the appraiser and a collaborative development of a personal growth plan (Texas Education Agency, 1993c).

Student Performance

The legislation also strongly affected students in several areas including attendance, testing, and extra-curricular activities. House Bill 72 created the five-day absence rule. Simply stated, students with more than five unexcused absences during semester received a failing grade. The definition of excused and unexcused, however, was left to the principal's discretion, which ultimately impacted the effectiveness of the five-day rule (Ligon and Jackson, 1990).

Texas statutes resulting from HB 72 also required that students take basic skills tests at every other grade level and required passage of an exit-level examination for graduation. The resulting test was the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS), which replaced the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS) which had been used previously to assess the progress of students. The TEAMS was a criterion-referenced test assessing minimum basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics

and was administered to grades 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9 until the 1989–90 school year. During the 1989–90 school year, grade 1 students were no longer tested. At grades 11 and 12, the TEAMS testing was limited to mathematics and English until the beginning of the 1990–91 school year when the student testing program was changed from the Texas Education Assessment of Basic Skills Test (TEAMS) to the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). The TAAS includes an assessment of student writing skills at the exit level (Texas Education Agency; 1991a).

To develop the TEAMS, the Texas Education Agency contracted with Instructional Objectives Exchange (IOX) Assessment Associations to construct the test. In addition, numerous school districts and regional services centres were also involved in the test development. The TEAMS test objectives were correlated to the essential elements of the state curriculum and were intended to demonstrate which skills students have and have not mastered. The criterion-referenced test measured performance on each objective separately. The tests were reviewed by Texas Education Agency staff and field advisory committees, and pilot tested. For example, the exit-level test was pilot tested by approximately 3,000 high school seniors. The resulting four forms of the test were adopted by the State Board in June 1985 (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1985). Because passing the test was a requirement for graduation, high school students were given the opportunity to take the test several times. Students at other levels were not required to retake the TEAMS or to pass the test in order to be promoted to the next grade.

One student issue that caused the most vocal opposition was actually quite a simple concept (McNeil, 1987). Students were required to pass every course during a six-week grading period in order to participate in extra-curricular activities during the following six-week grading period. The passing rate required that grades must be 70 or better on a 100 scale in each class. Thus the phrase was coined, 'no pass/no play.' The provision was included in HB 72 because, generally, the public believed that the public schools set low academic requirements for students participating in extra-curricular activities. Accordingly, the public feared that when students completed their eligibility to participate in sports or other extra-curricular activities they would not have the qualifications or incentive to complete high school (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1993).

Coaches and sponsors of extra-curricular activities rose up in arms against the no pass/no play requirement. Coaches were well organized and managed extensive media coverage especially as no pass/no play was implemented in the fall of 1985. The more stringent academic requirements did result in the exclusion of some football players, band members, drill team members, and cheerleaders from participating in extra-curricular activities (McNeil, 1987). The resultant outcry from parents and professional organizations representing coaches and sponsors, however, did not convince the legislature to revise the no pass/no play requirement.

So What, or Did House Bill 72 Make a Difference?

With such massive changes affecting funding, students, and teachers, the question of impact or improvement is certainly in order. Did the reforms of HB 72 improve the inequitable funding of Texas public schools? Has the quality of Texas teachers been improved? Have students been positively influenced by the attendance rules, testing requirements, and restricted participation in extra-curricular activities? Not surprisingly, the answers to all three questions are, 'Yes, no, and, somewhat, under some circumstances.'

Impact of House Bill 72 on Texas Public School Funding

House Bill 72 attempted to equalize funding to the public schools of Texas and there is some evidence that substantial movement in that direction had occurred in the second year of equalization (Walker and Kirby, 1988). Specifically, the inequality of per pupil expenditure between the wealthy and poor districts was reduced in 1984–85. In addition, the gap between teachers' salaries in rich and poor districts also fell in 1984–1985 (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1985), with teacher salaries steadily increasing by nearly 7 per cent between 1984 and 1990. On the other hand, inflation during this period increased by 14 per cent. Although average teacher salaries increased in Texas, Texas dropped from twenty-first to thirty-second place in the nation for average teacher salaries between 1984 and 1990. In addition, teacher salaries continued to range widely (from $18,640 to $34,078 in 1990) as did benefits packages (from $2,000 to $3,500 for a full-time employee) (Texas Education Agency, 1991c).

Despite some improvements, the gap between high-wealth and low-wealth school districts did not disappear. For example, at the state average property tax rate in 1988, districts in the bottom 5 per cent of property wealth could generate only $370 per pupil. In contrast, districts in the top 5 per cent of property wealth could generate $5,313 per student. Furthermore, actual per pupil expenditures in 1988 ranged from $1,970 in some districts to $21,285 in others (Texas Education Agency, 1991c).

Another concern about equitable funding comes from the fact that although the 68th Legislature raised state taxes sufficiently to generate 4.9 billion in additional revenue over a three-year period, that amount was not sufficient to fund the mandated reforms. For example, all capital costs are paid by local funds, since Texas has no state aid for capital outlay. Accordingly, the cost of adding classrooms to meet the maximum class size of twenty-two students per teacher in grades K–2 and new pre-kindergarten classes was borne solely by local revenues. As a result, the taxing burden fell more heavily on low-wealth districts, which had the least ability to raise local revenues, resulting in one of numerous outcries from the local school districts (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1985).

Not surprisingly, then, despite improvements that were made as a result of HB 72, they were not to the satisfaction of the low-wealth districts. Subsequently, a group of low property-wealth school districts filed the 1987 Edgewood v. Kirby case. The suit challenged the constitutionality of the Texas school finance system and the resulting opinion charged that the Texas school finance system was unconstitutional since it did not maintain the efficiency or equal protection standards established in the Texas constitution. Subsequent legislation (Senate Bill 1, 1990, Senate Bill 351, 1991, and House Bill 2885, 1991) again attempted to address the efficiency and equity issues (Texas Education Agency, 1993c).

To date, the Texas Supreme Court has rejected each revision to the Texas public school finance system. The Supreme Court established a deadline of June 1 1993 for an enactment of a constitutional system (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1993). On May 1 1993, the voters of Texas defeated three constitutional amendments proposed to enact the latest school finance revisions authorized by the legislature. As a result, law makers had one month to come up with an alternative school finance plan to comply with the court's deadline. Several proposals were considered. One would consolidate school districts state-wide, merging high property-wealth districts with less wealthy districts which would provide more equal funding levels for all students. This approach would combine more than 250 school districts across the state into 80 larger districts. Another proposal would keep the current 188 county education districts to distribute funds to schools. Local elections would be held in each county education district to allow sharing of property taxes among school districts within the district. If voters turn down the concept, their districts would be subject to state-set spending limits (*Dallas Morning News*, 1993).

So, was HB 72 effective in equalizing the funding for Texas public schools? That was, after all, the main thrust of the efforts of SCOPE and the 68th Legislature. Perhaps a fair answer is not a simple yes or no. More precisely, HB 72 put in to motion the political forces to keep the system moving towards efficiency and equity. It forced the system to take some small steps towards an equitable funding system. Perhaps more importantly, those initial efforts resulted in court decisions that require major steps be made to equalize funding for Texas public schools. The destination has not been reached, but the hazards along the way have been identified and are continued subjects for debate. At least the journey has begun but at the present time, the future of the Texas public school finance system is very undecided.

Impact of House Bill 72 on Teachers

The framers of HB 72 intended to improve the quality of teachers through teacher testing and a career ladder. Well, did it? Again, the results are

mixed. Teacher testing created fear, anxiety, anger, in Texas teachers. Even though over 96 per cent of the teachers taking TECAT passed, teacher resentment of the process is credited as a factor in Mark White's subsequent loss to Bill Clements in the 1987 gubernatorial race (McNeil, 1987). Aside from the political fall out, did teacher quality improve? McNeil (1987) thinks not. Critical of the cost of developing, administering, and scoring TECAT, McNeil concludes that the test '. . . changed few staff patterns, had little lasting impact on teachers' reading and writing skills, and no discernible impact on their teaching . . .' (p. 207).

Perhaps also worthy of mention, however, is the estimation that about 1,900 teachers failed the TECAT twice and consequently lost their credentials and their jobs in 1986. In addition, an estimated 4,000 teachers did not take the TECAT, did not retire, and were not employed the following school year (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1993). To consider the possible impact on students of those numbers of teachers is sobering. For example, if each of the 1,900 teachers who failed the basic skills test had taught twenty-two elementary students, the educational programmes of 41,800 students would have to be supervised by teachers who were unable to master literacy skills. For each of those 1,900 teachers who taught secondary students, the numbers of affected students would increase dramatically. Data are not available to determine the literacy skills of the estimated 4,000 teachers who chose to leave the profession rather than take TECAT. It is most reasonable to assume, however, that some of those 4,000 teachers would also not have been able to pass TECAT, and accordingly the numbers of impacted students could possibly be much higher.

There is also some evidence that teacher scores on TECAT are a predictor of student reading performance on the TEAMS. More specifically, Ferguson (1991) found that any given increase in teachers' scores on the TECAT predicted the same positive difference in students' scores on standardized tests. Thus, perhaps TECAT did support the general public's perception in the early 1980s that literate teachers are somehow linked to higher student performance. And, that perception was one of the factors that propelled the SCOPE to include teacher testing in HB 72 in the first place.

Whether or not the TTAS and career ladder have positively impacted the quality of teaching continues to be debated. Generally, teachers feel that the TTAS comes down to a song and dance routine and eliminates variety and creativity in teaching styles (McNeil, 1987). One result of the TTAS that is not necessarily related to improved teaching performance, however, is not in question. The TTAS process has resulted in salary increases for many teachers. As of August 1992, there were 71,900 teachers on Level II of the career ladder and another 55,700 on Level III. Thus salaries increased for 127,600 Texas teachers as a result of the career ladder (Texas Education Agency, 1993c).

Recent anecdotal data indicate some positive and negative impressions regarding the TTAS specifically and the 1980s reform efforts in general. According to a Texas Education Agency (1993c) survey, in early 1991 most school administrators believed the TTAS had improved teaching skills, while less than half of the teachers polled agreed. In a recent national Carnegie survey (1988), a majority of Texas teachers (63 per cent) indicated that instruction was better tailored to student needs since the reform movement; classroom interruptions had decreased (56 per cent); teacher salaries had increased (54 per cent); and that teacher involvement in setting school goals had increased (56 per cent). A majority of teachers (68 per cent) also indicated that teacher morale was worse because of the reform efforts. Overall, 83 per cent of Texas teachers gave the reform movement a passing grade.

Little attention has been paid to a component of the TTAS system that perhaps had the greatest effect on the quality of instruction in Texas. The system required that appraisals be completed by the teacher's immediate supervisor and one other appraiser. Accordingly, the campus principals became deeply involved in the appraisal process. Often the second appraisers were assistant principals or central office personnel. In order for the system to be implemented, training was required for all appraisers in the state. Subsequently, two courses were designed and required for all appraisers. The first requirement was satisfactory completion of a forty-hour course in Instructional Leadership. The course emphasized effective teaching practices, strategies for management of instruction, lesson development, and a common language about classroom instruction. Following satisfactory completion of Instructional Leadership, all appraisers had to complete a forty-hour training on the utilization of the appraisal instrument. In order to complete the class successfully, participants were required to pass a written examination on rules and regulations of the TTAS. In addition, participants were required to demonstrate an acceptable inter-rater reliability score based on the scoring of an observed teacher performance.

All Texas administrators and all faculty of approved Texas teacher education programs, and representatives from all twenty educational service centres participated in the training. In the summer of 1985 alone, more than 180,000 Texas administrators were trained (personal conversation with Dr Martha Stone, former director of the Division of Teacher Assessment, Texas Education Agency, May 12, 1993). As a result, all administrators and campus principals in particular were expected to know something about instruction, be able to discuss effective teaching practices with teachers, and make suggestions for improved instructional strategies. The training, combined with the statute requiring the principal to be an instructional leader (Texas Education Code, 1992b) required a change in the role of campus principals from campus managers to instructional

leaders. For the first time in Texas, campus principals were expected and required to know something about instruction and to be able to lead campus staff towards instructional improvement. No longer could campus principals be removed from the instructional process. Teachers had long complained that administrators knew nothing about what happened in their classrooms and were not qualified to evaluate them. The TTAS training promoted a common instructional vocabulary and a general agreement of effective teaching practices. The appraisal process ensured that campus principals would indeed get out of their offices and into the classrooms.

So, did teacher testing and the career ladder improve the quality of teachers in Texas? Some say yes, some say no. It cannot be denied however, that: (a) teacher testing did eliminate teachers who could not pass a literacy test from the classroom; (b) the career ladder resulted in salary increases for many Texas teachers; and (c) the training component of the TTAS was a state-wide effort to support campus principals as they were charged to assume the role of instructional leader, rather than campus manager.

The Impact of House Bill 72 on Students

Student testing was another major component of HB 72. So, what were the effects of all that testing and the massive amounts of energy and monies required by a substantial increase in student testing? Did student performance increase as measured by the mandated TEAMS? Did the requirement for students to pass the exit-level TEAMS affect dropout rates? And, how did the five-day attendance rule and the infamous no pass/no play rule influence students? Again, the results are mixed.

According to Texas Education Agency (1987, 1989a, 1991b) the educational reforms passed by the legislature had the desired effect of improving the educational performance of students. Indeed, the preliminary result of the February 1990 TEAMS tests indicated that for four years students had steady progress in mastering the skills assessed by the examinations. Ninth grade scores, however, had not improved as rapidly as the scores at other grade levels. Texas Education Agency (1991b) attributed the gains to the assumption that the 22:1 pupil–teacher ratio and the pre-kindergarten programs for disadvantaged and limited English proficient 4-year-old children had enabled local school districts to assist more students in mastering the required essential elements of instruction, which are measured by the TEAMS.

In the fall of 1990, the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) replaced the TEAMS. According to the Texas Education Agency (1993b), TAAS represents a more rigorous assessment than the TEAMS because it

measures complex thinking and problem solving, whereas the TEAMS focused on minimum-level skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. The first two years of TAAS administrations indicated progress and ongoing concerns in the performance of Texas students. Overall performance results remained steady or showed small increases in the number of students meeting minimum expectations on all tests taken between October 1990 and October 1991 for grades 5, 7, and 9. At the same time, slight declines for grades 3 and 11 were noted (Texas Education Agency 1993b). More specifically, in the October 1991 administration of TAAS, approximately less than a half (45 per cent)of the more than 1.1 million students passed all three sections of the test state-wide (Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, 1993).

And then, how did the requirement to pass the exit-level TEAMS or TAAS affect the dropout rate? A study conducted by Texas Education Agency (1991a) concluded that by itself, the exit-level examination was not the reason at-risk students gave for leaving school. Rather, it was in combination with being over age, behind in course credits, unable to participate in extra-curricular activities, in addition to the lack of options for 'catching-up.' The follow-up study (Texas Education Agency 1992a) reported that 66 per cent of the principals interviewed felt that the TEAMS exit-level examination had no impact on increasing the likelihood of graduation for regular students. In addition, 55 per cent of the principals reported that the TEAMS exit-level examination had decreased the probability of at-risk students completing high school and 32 per cent felt that the exit-level examination had produced no change in the probability of the at-risk students graduating from high school. That same study reported that no apparent difference was observed in the TEAMS/TAAS scores between dropouts and students still enrolled and that 9th grade TEAMS/TAAS performance was not a good predictor for dropping out.

Whether or not the five-day absence rule influenced student attendance has also been debated. Quite simply, students could not have more than five excused absences during each semester and receive credit for the class. However, the definition of 'excused' was to be determined by the local school district. In a study of absences of the Austin Independent School District, Ligon and Jackson (1990) found that attendance in Austin, Texas high schools was not improved during the five years that the five-day rule was in effect. Rather, the number of excused absences increased. Ligon and Jackson concluded that the five-day rule mandated by HB 72 failed because securing an excused absence became routine and in practice, attendance was not related to passing classes. Subsequent legislation revised the five-day rule eliminating language regarding excused or unexcused absences and required students to attend class for at least eighty days during a semester to receive course credit. The Texas Education Agency (1992a) reported a slight increase in the students losing credit because of

attendance from the last year that the five-day absence rule was in effect. The study also reported that students who were already alienated were the most affected by the attendance policy.

Texas Education Agency (1991a; 1992a) also studied the effects of no pass/no play and reported that students expressed positive attitudes toward the no pass/no play rule. In fact in one study (1991a), 70 per cent of the students, all of whom participate in extra-curricular activities, reported that they worked harder as a result of the rule. That perception mirrors the intent of HB 72. Another Texas Education Agency study (1992a) indicated that a majority (57 per cent) of the principals reported that no pass/no play had not reduced extra-curricular participation for regular students. On the other hand, 50 per cent of the principals indicated that no pass/no play had the reverse effect on at-risk students and had reduced participation in extra-curricular activities by at-risk students. Because the no pass/no play rule is perceived to have a differential effect upon at-risk and regular students, Texas Education Agency (1992a) recommended that the rule should be subject to more scrutiny and refinement.

So, how were students impacted by testing, attendance rules, and no pass/no play? Generally, performance has improved, although there is still much improvement to be made. The attendance rules seem to have had little effect on regular students and one study indicates that attendance worsened during the five years the five-day rule was in effect. Both the attendance rule and no pass/no play seem to have had a more negative impact on at-risk students than on regular students.

Conclusions and Observations

Ten years later there are no crystal clear visions of the impact of HB 72 on school finance, teachers, and students. Some progress in addressing disparities in school funding resulted from the legislation, but the Texas school finance system is still in chaos. Testing of all teachers and administrators probably plummeted morale to an all time low and ultimately propelled the educational community into a powerful political influence in the down fall of former governor Mark White. Granted, the career ladder system resulted in salary increases for many teachers, but most teachers and administrators are ready to discard the system. Although the training component required for the TTAS did provide the opportunity for Texas administrators a smoother transition from campus manager to instructional leader, it was a painful and difficult change.

And then, what about the impact on students? True, test scores have improved, but current student performance in Texas falls far below world class standards. In addition, there are indications that the five-day absence rule did not produce improved student attendance. Finally, the no/pass no/play rule had had either a positive or no effect on students who are

not in at-risk situations. It has, however, had a negative impact on those students who are in at-risk situations.

The intentions of the SCOPE and the 68th Legislature were to create an equitable school finance system, improve the quality of teachers, and improve student performance. True, some improvements have been noted, but the educational system in Texas still has a long way to go.

Chapter 4

The Shift to School-based Management in New Zealand — The School View

Cathy Wylie

In August 1988 the New Zealand Government published a policy document on education administration, *Tomorrow's Schools*, which shifted responsibility for budget allocation, staff employment, and educational outcomes from central and regional government agencies to individual schools. The devolution it proposed began in May 1989, taking the New Zealand education system further and faster down this route than any other western country. This makes the New Zealand reforms of considerable interest elsewhere; shedding some light on the effect such devolution can have on curriculum and resource provision, relations between parents and professionals, and progress towards more equal educational outcomes for members of different social groups. The social and historical context in which these reforms occurred is also important in analysing their shape and impact.

This description of major trends in the experience of those at school level who were charged with implementing the reforms is drawn primarily from a series of surveys conducted between 1989 and 1993; an annual postal survey 1989–91; a survey of principals, teachers and trustees in a 10.5 per cent national sample (239) of primary schools in New Zealand; a survey of parents in a subsample of these schools, (Wylie 1990; 1991 and 1992); and two surveys of principals, teachers and trustees of secondary schools, conducted in 1991 and 1992 (Keown *et al.* 1991; McGee *et al.* 1993).

The Social and Historical Context of the Shift to School-based Management in New Zealand

New Zealand has a small population (3.4 million), and a relatively simple political structure which moves directly from national to local level without a federal level. The parliament is unicameral, and has been elected by a first past the post system (changing to mixed-member proportional

representation in 1996) which rarely results in coalition governments. Effective parliamentary control rests in the governing party's cabinet members. This made it comparatively easy for the radical economic and social policy shifts which began in 1984, almost immediately after the election of the Labour Party to Government, to occur swiftly (Boston *et al.* 1991). The changes to educational administration were one of a raft of similar major shifts based on comparable principles of seeking more 'efficiency', 'accountability', and 'effectiveness' in public services, capping or cutting the expenditure of taxpayers' money through shifting responsibilities onto the voluntary or private sectors, in response to a perceived 'fiscal crisis' (Codd, 1990; Grace, 1990).

One strand throughout these changes unique to New Zealand is the emphasis on meeting the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, signed in 1840 between the indigenous Maori and the English colonists, which guaranteed continuing resource and cultural rights to the Maori. Its recognition in tangible form continues to be disputed ground, but it is ground which cannot be ignored after the cabinet agreed that future legislation should acknowledge it.

Another and not unrelated strand is the emphasis on 'equity' which emerged from two disparate sources: an economist understanding from Treasury, and the social liberal sense of improving opportunities for previously disadvantaged groups — mainly Maori, women, Pacific Island people,[1] working-class people (usually referred to as 'low socio-economic status'), and the disabled (Benton, 1988; NZCER, 1988). The Picot working party, whose report provided much of the basis for the *Tomorrow's Schools* policy outline, brought together the two strands both in its members and in the seconded officials from Treasury and the State Services Commission (SSC) who served them. This emphasis on social equity has given the New Zealand educational reforms a somewhat different flavour than devolution elsewhere (Lauder *et al.* 1990). It has marked some of the funding arrangements, the outcomes for which school boards were to be held accountable, and has given some leverage for critics of the reforms.

The reforms in New Zealand addressed, at least on the surface, only the administrative arrangements for education. Unlike other countries, a national curriculum, with local latitude, has been in place since the provincial systems were united into one national system at the end of the nineteenth century. A major review of the curriculum had been recently conducted, and a report published which outlined underlying principles, including closer links between teaching staff and parents (Department of Education, 1987). But the reforms did not arise out of widespread dissatisfaction with the education system — the four main problems identified in a November 1987 public opinion poll were: shortage of funds, too few teachers, inadequate buildings, and inadequate equipment (Heylen, 1987). There had been calls since the 1975 Educational Development Conference, in which thousands participated in discussion groups, for more community

involvement in schools and educational policy making (Barrington, 1990). A national opinion poll conducted for the Department of Education just before the inception of the reforms found only 15 per cent of primary school parents, and 26 per cent of secondary school parents dissatisfied with the current level of involvement parents could have with their child's school (Heylen, 1989).

The Reorganization

Before the reforms, each of the 2361 primary and intermediate schools[2] had a school committee of between five and nine people, depending on the size of its roll. School committees were elected by those local householders and parents of students who showed up at the school's annual general meeting, from amongst their ranks. These committees were mainly concerned with property maintenance, including the appointment of cleaners, and fund raising. The 315 secondary schools had boards of governors with a minimum of nine and a maximum of twelve members, most elected by parents of children attending the school, but with designated representatives from the local city or borough council, local feeder schools, and the local Education Board. There were ten of the latter, responsible mainly for making primary school appointments, inspecting schools, grading teachers, providing materials, and carrying out maintenance and repairs. The education boards were the last remaining tie with the provincial school system of the nineteenth century; their membership consisted of interested volunteers, usually coming from school committees, and representatives from local government. Regional levels of the Department of Education provided a parallel but more limited service for secondary schools.

Funding for schools was based on historical cost, and, for repairs and capital works, place in the queue decided by the Education Board for primary schools, and Department of Education for secondary schools. Staffing allocations were based on school rolls, but in steps rather than a per student amount. In addition, schools in low income areas and/or high Maori enrolment (the two usually overlapped), or a reasonable proportion of children from homes whose first language was not English received more staffing. Staffing allocations and payment were done at the national level.

The *Tomorrow's Schools* reorganization did away with education boards and the regional arm of the Department of Education, making each school a stand alone unit, dealing individually with the new central agencies. The Department of Education's functions were deemed to be incompatible in the new environment, which saw the need to separate 'provider' from 'funder', or doer from overseer (now contractor), and it was split into several new agencies. The new Ministry of Education, which came into being on 1 October 1989, continued to combine a funding function, and

a policy-making function. The Minister of Education became its sole 'client'. The Education Review Office (ERO) was set up to monitor schools' performance, initially against the terms of their individual charters rather than any predetermined national or age-related attainments, and in a two–three year cycle of visits by multi-disciplinary teams. Both the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office have been 'restructured' several times in the three years since 1989, in line with continuing cutbacks in functions and staff numbers throughout the public service.

The National Education Qualifications Authority (NEQA) took charge of the national examinations framework at secondary and post-secondary levels. Psychologists and others working with special needs children were reformed into the Special Education Service. This was initially fully centrally funded, with the intention to move it to at least 50 per cent funding through purchase of its services by schools (if they chose) from their individual grants. The Advisory Service, which provided support and in-service training, was relocated to Colleges of Education, with a similar goal of 'contestibility' in view. A new function which provided a channel for parents, as opposed to schools, was set up in the small Parent Advocacy Council. This body was abolished by the National government in its first year of office after the 1990 elections.

The Picot working party report had a number of 'checks and balances' such as this Parents Advocacy Council (Picot *et al.* 1988). It recommended that a ministerial advisory committee on education be set up, independent of any of the central agencies; and it recommended community education forums to bring schools and people together to resolve local issues, to provide a channel for ideas and concerns raised at the 'flax roots' to reach central government, and to encourage discussing educational matters, improving the general understanding of contemporary education, and supporting the spread of useful innovations. These recommendations became considerably watered down by the time they reached legislation, ending up as a mechanism for the minister to initiate when issues arose which might affect several schools in a locality. In the event, only a few community education forums were held. Several of these were held when individual primary schools wanted to increase their roll (and funding) by providing classes for children who would normally have gone to the local intermediate. Such a decision is likely to affect other schools' rolls, and the viability of the intermediate, and thus the number of options available to future students. The ministerial decision after one community education forum in 1990 effectively was to allow individual schools to make such decisions without regard for the effects on other local schools: a decision which left a sour taste in the mouths of those who had participated in a rather hasty and frustrating process (Mansell, 1992). The community education forums policy was replaced in the 1991 budget with the Educational Development Initiative (EDI), which promoted school consolidation, but also allowed schools to make their own decisions about the levels of

schooling they would cover. So far, some individual schools have extended (rather than contracted) their range; and attempts at consolidation, where there are under-utilized facilities because of demographic changes, have usually met with local resistance.

At the school level, primary committees and boards of governors were replaced with boards of trustees, consisting of five parents elected by other parents, the principal, a staff representative elected by all staff, and in secondary schools, a student representative. Up to four others could be co-opted by the board to provide additional expertise, or to provide gender, ethnic, or class 'balance'. Their powers, and responsibilities, were more wide ranging than the bodies they replaced. Initially, they were responsible for allocating and managing the school's budget, consisting of its operational grant and any locally raised funds; for appointments and dismissals, including the principal; and for the general performance of the school, and maintenance of its buildings and grounds. Teacher salaries remained the responsibility of the Ministry of Education.

Accountability for school funding was to be through school charters, with some mandatory sections mainly on curriculum; Treaty of Waitangi recognition; and meeting the needs of students from previously disadvantaged groups. School charters were to be drawn up by each school's board of trustees, after extensive consultation with their 'school community', and would provide a contract between the school and the Ministry of Education. They provided a record of the school's 'particular character', and aims. Initially they appeared to guarantee adequate government resourcing for the agreed outcomes. It was not surprising, though acutely disappointing to many who had enthusiastically spent much time developing their school charters, that the Ministry retreated to a rather nebulous statement of good intention on the part of school boards of trustees, with no Government commitment to provide adequate resources. This unilateral change to the charter, not long after the first operational grants to schools had had to be redone because the original estimates were below many schools' budgets for their first year as self-managing units, did not go down well with the new trustees.

An extensive media campaign was run before the first trustees' election in May 1989, and most schools had a good selection of candidates. Introductory training was provided by seminars, often at a general level. The Government also provided some money to fund the setting up of a new national body for school trustees, the NZ School Trustees Association (NZSTA) and contracted with it to provide further training for the pioneer trustees.

NZSTA now covers most of New Zealand's boards of trustees. Funding comes from membership fees (varying according to roll size), and contracts with the Ministry of Education, including the development of a regional support service (developed as the ministry cut its own regional staff). Policy development has not always been easy, or as swift as

politicians and those in central agencies would like it to be, dependent as it is on voluntary responses. Satisfaction with the representativeness of the national organization has been mixed, particularly as the 1990–1992 president was a member of a Conservative discussion group, the Education Forum, and, contrary to most of NZSTA's members, supported full bulk funding (or the inclusion of teacher salaries into school funding). NZSTA has also adopted, as a base principle, its support for school autonomy in decision making, which ensures a very powerful voice for minority initiatives, whatever their short- and long-term effect on other schools, and on the national education system.

Hopes and Fears

> The Government is certain that the reform it proposes will result in more immediate delivery of resources to schools, more parental and community involvement, and greater teacher responsibility. It will lead to improved learning opportunities for the children of this country. The reformed administration will be sufficiently flexible and responsive to meet the particular needs of Maori education. (Minister of Education, 1988, p. iv)

Other hopes were that the savings identified by the original working party report would provide additional money for schools; that the charter, with its substantial mandatory component, would make schools more accountable for improving their provision for students from disadvantaged groups; that innovation in curriculum and teaching methods would be encouraged; and that more people would take an interest in education (Minister of Education, 1988; Picot *et al.* 1988; Wylie, 1988).

The fears were that such devolution would eventually dissolve a national system of education into a patchwork of variable provision, increasing rather than decreasing the existing disparities; would increase competition between schools, and among teachers within schools, without any educational advantages; would make schools more parochial or insular; would open schools to narrow interest groups; make it harder to achieve equal employment and educational opportunities for disadvantaged groups, particularly females and Maori; would gradually cut back state funding for education; and on a related but different tack, that the ground for real innovation was in fact likely to be quite small, given the need for accountability through nationally comparable measures such as assessment and financial reporting (Khan 1990, Lauder *et al.* 1990, Wylie, 1988).

These fears were not just held by educationalists, teacher unions, and quite a number of educational researchers, many of whom were in favour of the stated aims of the reforms. In the parent opinion poll cited above:

73 per cent agreed with the statement that 'Schools in different areas will not be equal as a result of the new system'; 70 per cent that 'Boards of Trustees could be taken over by parents with extreme views'; 54 per cent that 'Too many changes are taking place too quickly'; and 50 per cent that 'The Government is avoiding its responsibilities by making these changes'. Only 42 per cent thought that 'the new system will improve standards of education' (Heylen, 1989).

These survey results seem to have been fed into the initial implementation phase of the changes. One reason for the wide media campaign on the initial trustee elections was to encourage wide participation to counter the fears of small group 'takeovers'. Staffing allocations for schools in disadvantaged areas were continued, and a separate pool of 'equity funding' established for schools meeting set criteria. Operational grants were also based on historical costs which acknowledged regional and school size differences in prices and costs (for example, in electricity and heating), rather than nationally averaged costs.

The Story So Far

The first two years of the reforms were something of a white water journey for school staff, especially principals, and the new trustees. They were asked to develop their charter, budget, property, and equipment asset record, and policies stemming from the charter within time frames which would have been difficult even if all the data needed was already available, and all the board members had been full time professionals.[3] The requirements for these various means of estimating funding and providing accountability to the central funding agency, and also to parents of students, often changed, largely because the centre itself was undergoing change. Policy decisions were made very much on the hoof, and not infrequently by people without the background to anticipate likely effects. The savings which the Picot group anticipated did not turn up on schools' doorsteps — indeed, they were never there. 'Paperwork' became the bane of school staff and trustees' existence, the symbol for their inseparability from those who funded them, and their requirements. The Picot report might have criticized bureaucratic procedures, and delays in getting decisions, and devolution certainly gave schools powers they welcomed to decide their own purchases of equipment, at times that suited them, and to decide how to allocate their budget between priority areas. But, like any other system of public funding, it makes its own demands. Principals and trustees are now 'free' to make their own case for both regular and special funding, but make it they must, each year, if not several times a year, and in a form acceptable to the central funding agency.

In many schools, people coped — or asserted themselves — by ignoring the centrally set deadlines, reasoning that the government was unlikely

to close them down or cut off their funding because they had not returned their charter, or signed their property occupancy agreement. They were right. Indeed it is only recently that the Ministry of Education has stopped quarterly payments to the few schools which have not sent in audited accounts from the previous financial year.

But though people at schools can shift around some of the outside demands on them to a certain extent, they cannot define or limit those demands. In the 1993 survey, the five main sources of trustee dissatisfaction with their work were: paperwork, lack of funding, workload, dealing with the Ministry of Education, or Government regulations, and continuing changes in Government policies. For principals, the major sources of dissatisfaction were also paperwork, administration and workload, dealing with government agencies and funding. For teachers, it was administration, workload or stress, and record keeping and assessment. Just under half the primary teachers in the 1993 survey said that the *Tomorrow's Schools* changes had had a negative impact on their job satisfaction.

Devolution of administrative responsibility to schools has entailed a sizeable workload. Just under half the trustees were spending two to five hours a week on average on their work for the school, with 23 per cent spending more. By 1993, there was a slight improvement: 52 per cent spent two to five hours, with 16 per cent spending more. 1992 secondary trustee figures were very similar (McGee *et al.* 1993). Primary principals' workload shot up between 1989 and 1990, and has remained high, with 45 per cent working more than 60 hours a week on average in 1993. Teacher workloads also rose in the second year of the reforms, and have remained at a much higher level than before the reforms. Three-quarters of primary teachers work more than the 40 hours a week specified in their 1992 collective employment contract.

While there were some in the central government agencies who concluded that these workloads reflected individual creation of possibly unnecessary work, this was not the conclusion of the 1988 British report on devolution to school level, which was available to the Picot working party:

> Experience of delegation schemes to date suggests that LMS [local management of schools] adds considerably to the administrative workload at school level, a factor which emphasizes the need to lighten the administrative burden on schools in other respects. (Coopers and Lybrand 1988, p. 37)

This report suggested such assistance to schools as the provision of microcomputers, with standard software to keep the school records needed by the funding body, and appointing a part-time administrative person to cover the five to fifteen additional hours of administrative support it estimated schools would need to carry out delegation. It is worth noting that the English equivalent of the New Zealand board of trustees is a more

distant body, with termly rather than monthly meetings, for example, and no responsibilities of community consultation. It is also worth noting that many New Zealand schools are small by international standards (only 38 per cent of primary schools have more than 200 students, and, of secondary, only 11 per cent have more than 1000 students). Most primary schools had only part-time clerical support before the *Tomorrow's Schools* reforms, and while it is common for hours to have been extended, and new skills gained, much of the new work is carried out by school staff and trustees. One reason is the need for the work to be done, particularly in limited time-frames (such as deadlines for applications). But another reason is that boards of trustees are cautious in their spending — as some of the reform architects hoped. Their prime interest is to provide for children's learning: and if they can make savings in other budget areas through voluntary work, or cut price deals, they will do so, particularly in primary schools. For example, they waive their $55 (before tax) monthly fees, they organize working bees, or, with school staff, turn up themselves to make minor repairs. They ferret out sources of cheap or free labour from unemployment schemes and the justice system (periodic detention, prisons). If they have grounds and halls that they can rent out, they do so — organizing the bookings, checking after use, chasing up payments and bonds. They write the board's correspondence and cheques, and may also do the school accounts. They check out tradespeople, sources of supply and interest rates obtainable on their quarterly payments of Ministry of Education funding. They keep an eye out for fund raising prospects and bargains. In short, boards of trustees and staff have become entrepreneurs as well as administrators and managers, and many have derived satisfaction, if not enjoyment, from their achievements for school provision. However, their responsibilities as school providers have so far left little room for school site innovation. Table 4.1 shows the dominance of finance and property in their work. The 1992 secondary school data gave a similar picture.

Another prime source of satisfaction for trustees is working as part of a team. Relations between trustees, and between trustees and the

Table 4.1: Primary trustees' ranking of time spent on major board activities by their board, 1993

Areas	*Most time* %	*Second most* %	*Third most* %	*Fourth most* %	*Fifth most* %
Financial management	26	25	20	13	8
Property/maintenance	26	24	20	14	7
Day-to-day management	23	12	13	11	13
Policy decisions	16	14	22	23	12
Personnel/industrial	9	5	8	16	16
Curriculum	4	11	8	12	30
Other	1	2	2	2	14

Table 4.2 Views of existence of problems in relations at the school, 1993

Problems	*Principals' Views* %	*Trustees' Views* %	*Teachers' Views* %
Between principal and trustees	8	12	n/a
Between principal and staff	7	n/a	25
Between trustees and staff	6	4	15
Between trustees	12	4	n/a

professionals at the school have so far been less problematic than some originally feared.

There are several factors which might account for this harmonious picture of working relations at school level. 'Partnership' has been stressed throughout the reorganization, in the official policy documents, papers setting out the role of boards of trustees, and by trustee and teacher representative organizations. It does not appear from the available data that trustees went onto boards with missionary intent as far as the professional areas of school life were concerned, nor that parents expected them to make major changes there. The fact that trustees had to be parents of children at a school, or in the case of the two-year intermediates, parents of an incoming child, and were elected by other parents may well have had a bearing also. At the end of 1991, legislation was passed which opened eligibility to non-parents. Trustee and parent views were divided about the merits of this: those who approved looked for the widening of the pool of available people, and the gaining of useful expertise; those who disapproved felt that non-parents had less interest in and commitment to the school.

American visitors have been particularly struck by the prominence of parents in school administration and support, given the power of non-parents, as local taxpayers, to decide the level of education funding in the United States. Some have suggested that it is dangerous in the long term to have only parents electing school trustees, since this runs the risk that non-parents will come to see schools as something they should not be taxed for. It is difficult to tell how applicable this analysis is to New Zealand, given that the education system has remained centrally funded through taxpayers' money, rather than through locally raised rates. The level of non-parental support for schools is also quite high in terms of fund raising and voluntary time, perhaps because, so far, New Zealand schools serve local neighbourhoods. School buses serve rural areas and urban secondary schools, but most primary school children can walk or bike to their school.

The second board of trustee elections were held in mid-1992, but there was no great influx of non-parents onto school boards. Fewer stood for election than the first round, and a number of schools did not hold elections.

Another important factor in the achievement of good working relations in most schools during the first four years of the reforms was that while boards of trustees were responsible for appointing and dismissing staff, they were not responsible for setting salary levels or conditions of employment. In fact, there has been marked resistance to the introduction of what some see as the 'final' building block of decentralization: the inclusion of teacher salaries in the grant to schools, or full bulk funding (Kerr, 1991; Shattky, 1991). The resistance has come not only from principals and teachers, but, somewhat to the surprise and dismay of those who promote it, also from school trustees. In 1990, when bulk funding was under examination in a Ministry of Education working group, 79 per cent of primary trustees in the NZCER survey opposed it. A national survey of secondary trustees carried out in March 1992, when 62 schools (or 2 per cent of all schools) had 'opted in' to a trial of bulk funding, found that 75 per cent opposed. The main reasons given were: that teacher salaries were the Government's responsibility; that trustees did not want any major additions to their voluntary workload; that relations between board and staff would be upset; that inequity between schools would increase; and that it would result in cuts to education funding. It is very clear from these reasons, and from other comments in the surveys about the future of education, that trustees see the adequate funding of education as a central, government role: not their own.

There is another clear signal of the limits which trustees would like to draw around their role and responsibilities. Changes to New Zealand's industrial relations legislation in 1991 (the Employment Contracts Act) made a major switch from national collective contracts to individual and site-based contracts. The NZSTA surveyed its members in mid-1992 for their views on whether or not they wished to retain the collective contract presently negotiated for teachers by their respective unions[4] and the State Services Commission, with the NZSTA playing a largely advisory role to the Commission. National collective contracts for teaching staff were favoured by four-fifths of the 700 boards which responded.

The resistance to bulk funding meant that the original plans to introduce it in 1991 were shelved, replaced first by the 'opt in' option in late 1991, taken up only by those schools who saw financial advantage to themselves in it, and then in mid-1993 by the introduction of 'management salary grants' in the Education Amendment Act Number 5. All but one[5] of the 900 submissions to the Select Committee considering this bill expressed opposition. Nonetheless, the bill was reported back to Parliament in November 1992 with its provisions largely intact. The management salary grants effectively imposed full bulk funding on the 188 sole-charge primary schools, with partial bulk funding covering principal, deputy principal and assistant principal positions in primary and intermediate schools, and all levels of management down to and including heads of departments in secondary schools.

Thus bulk funding has been introduced into schools despite the opposition of those in schools who must make devolution work. It must be said that similar strong opposition to radical restructuring of the health system (but through appointed rather than voluntary boards) has likewise failed to move a government which sees economic restructuring as paramount (and achievable only through keeping inflation to 2 per cent or less), focusing on exports, privatizing public assets and services, moving much of the public sector activity to contractual or contestable arrangements, cutting the public cost of social services such as education and health, and accepting the rise of unemployment, poverty and unequal distribution of resources, wealth and income as inevitable, albeit unfortunate, costs.

The opposition of those at the schools has certainly slowed down the introduction of full bulk funding, or total devolution. But the Government's determined stance, seemingly reluctant to accept the experiences and values of those at schools as valid, also shows the limits to boards of trustees' powers. It is not possible for trustees, even acting collectively, to have an active say in the environment or conditions in which they carry out their responsibilities. Although those in favour of full bulk funding make much of words like 'autonomy', 'choice', and 'flexibility', the irony is that only one kind of choice is acceptable.

Initially, since the grant is paid at existing salary levels, and inflation is low, schools will not be financially worse off. No board of trustees has refused to implement the salary management grant. The primary teacher union has managed to retain a national collective contract in place until 1994, so that individual boards will not necessarily have the onus of negotiating salaries. In many schools, the predicted bite of the move to full bulk funding will only be felt several years down the track. And whatever trustees' analysis of the long-term effects of full bulk funding on their school, and on the national education system, it will be very difficult for them to take steps which may result in the non-availability of education at the school — for their own and other parents' children — for any sizeable length of time. The scope for resistance is limited for those held responsible for public services such as education and health. These services are not seen as things which can wait, which can be done as well next year as this. Those most affected are those for whom the services exist.

What of the curriculum? While almost half the teachers in the 1991 primary survey noted only small changes to their curriculum, and 23 per cent noted no changes, by 1993, 57 per cent said there had been some change to their curriculum, 34 per cent noted a minor change, and only 8 per cent noted no change. However, the introduction of a new National Curriculum Framework was cited by 64 per cent as a reason for their change (and changes to national subject curricula by 44 per cent, compared to 8 per cent in 1991). These are not local initiatives. No major changes occurred between the 1989 and 1993 survey responses in the approximate

hours per week which teachers have reported that the children in their class would spend on the range of curriculum activities commonly taught in primary schools. Only 19 per cent of the parents in the 1991 survey appeared to have noticed changes to their child's classroom program. Yet increasingly teachers are reporting that the *Tomorrow's Schools* changes appeared to have had a positive impact on the content of what they taught — from 16 per cent in 1991 to 50 per cent in 1993.

Those curriculum changes reported by primary teachers in the four years since devolution were more use of computers (56 per cent), more Maori language (34 per cent) — mostly in schools with more than 8 per cent Maori enrolment — more integration of subjects (41 per cent), more emphasis on social skills (33 per cent), and more emphasis on basic skills (24 per cent). Only 3 per cent reported more religious or moral education.

Some growth occurred in programs and policies to cater for children disadvantaged with regards to educational provision, mainly for Maori children, special needs children and those whose home language is not English. The growth has not been universal: around two-fifths of the schools in the primary survey had not developed any programs or policies for these groups by the end of 1993. The development of programs and policies to enhance learning opportunities for these children (such as the employment of staff with appropriate language skills, teacher aides, the purchase of suitable books and other resources) was related to individual school characteristics. For example, schools most likely to make efforts to improve the learning opportunities for Maori children were likely to have moderate to high Maori enrolment (15 per cent or more), and be located in urban, but not middle-class, areas. The schools least likely to have made changes for children from disadvantaged groups were those least likely to have them on their rolls: those with rolls of less than 100, in rural areas. Changes in provision therefore appear to be pragmatically based on the characteristics of current students, and the existence of additional central funding.

However, although eligible for (sometimes quite small) additional funding, schools serving disadvantaged groups, particularly Maori and Pacificer Island, were also more likely to have fewer human and material resources, and higher costs, than other schools. For example, schools with more than 30 per cent Maori enrolment had much more difficulty finding suitable teachers than others, an indication of the problems faced by such schools in implementing the more suitable programs they were devising.

The main pattern which emerges from an inspection of the quite wide-ranging data which the annual surveys of primary and intermediate schools have yielded on financial and human resources is that differentials which existed in schools before the reforms have widened. Schools in middle-class areas, with low Maori enrolment and good physical plant, are likely not to experience some of the costs and difficulties (such as truancy, difficulty in attracting suitable teachers) faced by schools in low income

areas, with high Maori enrolment, and to have more voluntary time and financial resources available to them. These differences in costs and resources appear to be feeding through to different patterns of resource allocation, with schools in middle-class areas, for example, able to spend more than those in low income areas on staff development, part-time temporary teaching staff, implementation of new policies, and classroom materials. The switch to school-based management does not seem able by itself to overcome these differentials.

Some of the most innovative curriculum work occurs in Kura Kaupapa Maori, schools set up by Maori communities, using Maori as the language of instruction. Most of these schools have struggled to receive government funding on a par with other schools, with the result that full bulk funding was irresistable to some. Because almost all national curriculum materials and resources have been developed and produced in English only, staff at these schools have faced, and grasped, the immense task of developing their own, more appropriate, curriculum. For example, an analysis of Maori reading texts produced by Learning Media, the Government's publisher of free curriculum resources for schools, found only enough material for twenty weeks of the 160 school weeks for 5- to 8-year-olds, and twelve to fifteen weeks learning material of the estimated 200 school weeks for 8- to 12-year-olds (Hamilton, 1993). Initial enthusiasm and hard work, however, have their limits, and 'burn-out' is occurring. It is difficult to see how this effort can be sustained and built on if some coordinated resourcing is not available at the national level.

The Story Ahead

The systematic data we have on the effect of the reforms so far indicates that most of the initial fears were probably more soundly based than most of the initial hopes.

The level of parent and community involvement has not altered greatly, but it was already quite high in many New Zealand primary and intermediate schools. They draw students mainly from the local neighbourhood, they are comparatively small, and many operate 'open door' policies in schools. Those parents who serve as trustees have certainly taken on wider powers and responsibilities than their predecessors on school committees and boards of governors. But most are not in close contact with other parents: like other voluntary boards, they hear when things displease, rather than about everyday matters, the taken-for-granted. Parents who are not trustees notice higher fee levels and more fund raising activities, more call on their time to help in workbees, and more school staff time going into administration.

Through the boards, schools have gained parental advocates: people willing to back school staff in their efforts to secure adequate operational

or capital funding, and keen to counter national policies which seem to create disadvantage or frustrate their local efforts. In the main this has been directed to administrative, structural and resource policies, such as bulk funding, rather than moves in curriculum and assessment. Public awareness has probably been raised in a similar way, focusing more on funding and structures rather than curriculum. There has been more media coverage of education since the reforms, with one of the two national Sunday papers creating a special section.

People in schools have certainly enjoyed their increased scope to decide resource allocation and priorities, where there has been adequate money to allow some choice and planning. However, there has been a steady increase in the proportion of those who regard their Ministry of Education operational grant as inadequate: from 21 per cent of primary principals in 1990 to 55 per cent in 1993. 38 per cent of the secondary principals in the 1992 survey also judged their government funding to be inadequate.

Because schools already had leeway over their choice of curriculum materials such as books (unlike, say, the restricted choice of some US school districts, where materials are bought at district level), the impact of decentralisation on choice of curriculum material is probably more limited than elsewhere. It is possible for schools to request permission to use some of their operational grant on teacher salaries. More primary schools are doing so: from 11 per cent of primary schools in the 1991 survey to 25 per cent in the 1993 survey. In 1991 schools were spending an average of $4,005, indicating the appointment of temporary or part-time teaching staff.

Reorganisation did not produce any savings, and the disappointment of raised hopes added to the discontent of some trustees with the reforms, and with the central agencies. Perhaps this made it easier for cutbacks and restructurings to the Ministry of Education and Education Review Office. Both these agencies have firmly identified the Minister of Education as their prime client. Consultation with people outside occurs far less, and at a later stage of policy development than before the reorganization. People in schools continue to have an ambivalent, cautious, or sceptical attitude to the central agencies, regarding them as 'theorists' rather than people in tune with the practicalities of education, and, if anything, more bureaucratic in style than before the reforms.

It is hard to say whether teachers have become more 'responsible'. We have very little material on their level of responsibility prior to the shift to school-based management. Teachers and principals have probably become more self-conscious about satisfying the parents of their students (since students mean funding, or its withdrawal), but in the absence of any strong parental criticism of curriculum, and the indications of general satisfaction with the quality of education their children are receiving (81 per cent in the 1993 primary survey, much the same since 1990, and 74 per cent of 4th form (14–15-year-olds) parents in the 1992 secondary survey).

Table 4.3 Issues raised by parents to their school's board of trustees

Issue	%
Discipline (including uniform)	23
Extra-curricular provision (e.g., school camps)	9
Curriculum provision	8
Dissatisfaction with staff member	8
Health and safety	7
Policy (unspecified)	7
Grounds/school maintenance	7
Staffing/class size	6
Transport	6
Funding/fundraising	5
Future of the school	5
Provision for Maori children	5
Future of school	5

Table 4.3 shows the kinds of issues which parents were raising with their primary or intermediate school's board of trustees in 1993.

There has been an increased emphasis on staff appraisal systems. Just under 60 per cent of the primary teachers in the 1991 survey reported that their school appraised their teaching performance; and 55 per cent of secondary teachers in 1992. Most of the appraisal systems were developed on site, and put in place after the reorganization. So far they have played no part in pay decisions. 31 per cent of the secondary principals in the 1992 survey said their appraisal system was useful in making promotion decisions, but 21 per cent saw little benefit in using their system for that purpose.

School charters were to be the main accountability mechanism between individual institutions and the (funding) centre (Gordon, 1992). The policy dilemma here was to steer a line between seeming to make too much mandatory, allowing individual institutions little leeway, and allowing individual institutions to put in place emphases which went against the goals of improving educational opportunities and outcomes for disadvantaged groups. At school level, there was a feeling that the mandatory part of the charter was contradictory to the promise of autonomy at school level, though this did not overly concern those who saw their autonomy as occurring within a national system of provision, or who had no quarrel with the equity aspects of the charters.

The line steered phrased the mandatory sections in terms of 'objectives', usually leaving the translation of the objective into particular form to individual school definition. For example, one of the equity goals was: 'To enhance learning by ensuring that the curriculum is non-sexist and non-racist and that any disadvantage experienced at the school by students, parents, or staff members because of gender or religious, ethnic, cultural, social or family background is acknowledged and addressed.' The objectives which went with this were:

- by the end of 1990, state a policy on equity regarding learning and teaching programs and the selection of learning materials to ensure that they are non-sexist and non racist;
- by the end of 1990, establish a policy on equity regarding access by all students to learning programs and physical resources;
- every year review and update policies in the light of any observed or expressed claims of disadvantage.

Because the charters were to be used as the yardstick by which to assess school performance, in the context of continued funding, people at schools were often careful to phrase charter statements in the abstract, rather than tie themselves down to specific goals, or guarantees, such as 'the proportion of Maori children reading at or above their age range will be at least 80 per cent'. Charters often became descriptions of *existing* practice, rather than laying the ground for new development. Only 15 per cent of trustees and 16 per cent of principals in the 1993 primary survey felt their school's charter had made its education more equitable, though by 1993, 32 per cent of teachers (double the 1991 proportion) felt it had had an impact on their curriculum.

What the charter framework did do was to set issues such as equity and the Treaty of Waitangi before trustees, parents who took part in consultation, and school staff. It does appear to have improved understanding, to the extent that when the National Party took power in 1990, the new Minister's announcement that he would withdraw the equity components of the mandatory part of the charter met with opposition from NZSTA as well as teacher unions and concerned Maori and women's groups. The equity components were not formally withdrawn, but because the charters were so generally phrased, and the ERO did not seem to be using them as a performance yardstick, the charter has become less relevant to schools, though it was certainly useful to them in providing a focus for activity and identification in the first year of the restructuring.

But even the mandatory sections of the charter were not seen as necessary by many in schools: 68 per cent of the primary schools in late 1993 had no anti-racist policy, and 46 per cent no anti-sexist policy or program. This is not because equity issues are regarded by people in schools as irrelevant, or worse. Qualitative data indicates that equity is respected as a principle, but seen more as equality of opportunity, rather than equality of outcome (Middleton and Oliver, 1990); and then equality of opportunity to share the same thing, rather than to provide different learning paths or methods. Many in schools thus feel that they are already meeting the needs of different ethnic groups through their existing programs. The restructuring, and work on the charters, has so far not been able to shake this widespread belief.

It is hard to see how attitudes and beliefs which are misplaced can be shifted in a system of school self-management, stressing the potency and

validity of local decision making. A parallel issue has been raised with contestability in special education services, advisory services, and inservice training. The early childhood sector has gone further down this track than others, and anecdotal evidence (it becomes increasingly difficult to research these issues) suggests that centres most in need of advice and training are the least likely to seek it.

The time-frame in which charters and policies were to be developed also worked against any more sophisticated development of the understanding of equity, and what is needed to achieve it, in schools. Indeed the time-frame went against the grain of much research literature on school development, especially that involving lay people (Ramsay *et al.* 1990). If charters combining national and individual institutional elements provide both viable methods of accountability (responsibility), and improving educational outcomes through this accountability, then a longer time-frame is needed for their proper development.

What of the fears of the reforms? Not all have been realized. Narrow interest groups have prevailed in only a few of the country's schools. This may be partly because the geographic nature of the 'school community' would make it difficult for communities of interest to have the majority of votes — a factor which in part has also prevented innovative groups from having an impact. The proportion of women in senior school positions has not worsened but neither has it improved. One bias in senior staff appointments, which on anecdotal evidence may exist, is toward the age-range of the trustees, most in their thirties and forties. It is more likely for teachers known to the school principal or board to be appointed than others. Relations between teachers have remained as mutually supportive as before, perhaps because the national collective contracts have been retained, and, through concerted action on the part of teachers and trustees, full bulk funding held off.

Parochialism has not found its way into the curriculum, apart from a few pockets of schools. But it is expressed in 'hands off' responses to any move at the national level to encourage the consolidation (and closure) of schools. Work on the charters included a description of the community of each school, and its 'mission statement'. These have resurfaced in the opposition to such moves, as each school (parents as well as staff) cites its individual character.

Inequity is certainly growing. Central government funding to schools has been shaved (through a slight cutback to the operational grant at the end of 1990, and the addition of relief teaching costs to those expenses to be covered by the operational schools grant at the beginning of 1992). This latter imposition has had a variable impact on schools as across the board funding formulae do. While the number of schools who could not cover this additional cost and stay in budget was quite small by September 1992 (forty or so), the margin of comfort was low enough for the Government to withdraw money from a relief teaching pool long existent in

a poor area with high Maori and Pacific Island enrolment, providing a stable pool of suitable teachers, in order to spread it across a larger band of schools. Many of the schools which managed to cover the extra cost did so by principals providing the relief teaching, sick teachers continuing to come to schools, doubling up of classes, use of teacher aides to mind classes and, in one or two cases, sending children home.

Parents are paying slightly more for their children's education, as schools endeavour to improve their financial position through their own efforts. And if there has been innovation in schools, it is not easy for others to find out and build further on it: the former national structures, networks, and capacity for resource development provided through the Department of Education, particularly its curriculum development section, linked to advisors and inspectors out in the field, have gone. Most of the major initiatives described by principals and trustees in the 1993 survey were to do with the repair or improvement of school buildings and grounds rather than curriculum or teaching. This emphasis on the material aspects of schools probably reflects the poor state of many of the schools at the time of decentralization, plus an awareness that the looks of a school contribute to its attractiveness to parents and children in a more competitive environment.

The fears which were expressed at the start of New Zealand's devolution by analysts and people who would have to implement it have not (yet) been fully realized. It is too soon to pronounce the changes a success or failure. The trends, however, are in place, and so far they are more in line with those who expressed reservations about the reforms than those who put their full faith in them.

Much is made of school autonomy when it comes to managing budgets, and setting local curriculum goals. Yet the truth is that such autonomy, in any state funded system, must have its limits. The sore point for those volunteers and professionals now responsible for New Zealand's schools, is that the limits are being set in ways they do not see as beneficial for the students in them. The hand of the state, or rather its rulers, is still weighty, albeit in more distant, impersonal ways.

Notes

1. New Zealand drew on Pacific Island migrant labor in the 1960s and 1970s. New Zealand born and migrant people from the Pacific Islands now account for 3.6 per cent of New Zealand's population.
2. New Zealand children usually start school at five. Half the primary schools serve children for seven years, from the age of 5 to 11 or 12, when the children go to two year intermediate schools; the other half keep children until they go to secondary school at the age of 12 or 13, after nine years primary schooling.

3. A census of trustees just after the first election in May 1989 found an over-representation of trustees from professional occupations, and slightly more male than female trustees elected.
4. New Zealand Educational Institute represents primary, intermediate and early childhood education teachers, school support staff, and employees of the Special Education Service; the Post Primary Teachers Association represents secondary school teachers.
5. Made by the NZ Business Roundtable, an extremely successful lobby group representing big business interests.

Section II

From Policy to Practice

Papers in this section have been grouped together because they focus on the rather grey area between policy formulation and its translation into everyday practice at the various levels of educational delivery. In spite of shared intentions, or even shared perceptions that the innovation was a good idea at the time, this area is sometimes a vacuum, or at best a space, rather than being filled by mutually understood and accepted procedures and responsibilities.

In Chapter 5, Miriam Ben-Peretz reviews the establishment of the intermediate schools as essentially a structural change which had an impact far beyond the immediate reform policy. The main aims of the reform policy were improvement of scholastic achievement and increased social integration. Ben-Peretz identifies eleven factors which interacted in the process of the school reform. Not all of these were supportive — for example, the Elementary School Teachers' Union opposed the creation of intermediate schools; parent responses were dependent on whether they perceived the changes to advantage their children or not. She examines the possibilities of accounting for the reform process through conventional consensus and conflict analyses, which she concludes were inadequate in the Israeli context.

Ben-Peretz develops an alternative explanation through the concept of 'synergy' in which contributing factors work in harmony to reinforce each other and yield enhanced results which are greater than the sum of the parts. Concurrent with the establishment of intermediate schools, there were developments in curriculum, increasing professionalization of teaching through new teacher education programs, demands for teachers to up-grade their qualifications, and increased involvement of academics and researchers in schooling. Ben-Peretz notes that diminution of any of the factors contributing to the synergetic effect can slow the effect of the entire reform, as was the case when the government changed and active support for the reform process was reduced. In some respects, Ben-Peretz's concept of synergy runs parallel to the concept of 'policy windows' and the confluence of problem, alternative and political currents posited in Lowham's paper in that both recognize the multi-dimensional nature of the processes at work.

The focus of Jim Lowham's study in Chapter 6 is a state in the USA where concerns about school improvements and accountability were addressed virtually simultaneously by legislation from the State Government, and by policy action from the State Board of Education. Although the two groups of policy makers regarded their policies in quite different terms, their implementation and common focus remained undifferentiated in the eyes of many practitioners. Four groups of participants were interviewed in the study: the policy makers; the Chief State Schools Officer and the State Board of Education; The State Department of Education; local school districts and individual schools. Within an innovatory research design, two school districts were selected on the basis of their track

record concerning change efforts; one was regarded as having achieved more than might be expected, and the other as fairly typical in what had been accomplished. Within each district two schools were selected on a similar basis.

Significant factors in Lowham's study are the tensions that occur between the various stakeholders regarding their power, roles and functions, with respect to the conduct of education. One specific area of conflict was in funding. The State Board of Education was responsible for putting in place a new school accreditation rule, but the legislature was responsible for school finance, and did not make an Appropriations Bill to support the new accreditation requirement. As elsewhere in the US, local control of public education emerged as an issue at every level in this study. At the district level, local control produced diametrically opposed interpretations of the school accreditation rule; one district saw it as an opportunity for greater consensus and shared goals between schools and at different levels of schooling within the district; the other viewed it as legislation for difference, according to the perceptions and needs of each school community.

Lowham's study focuses on the gap between formulation of policy and its implementation. Despite tensions and conflicts between the various stakeholders, there appeared to be a shared conviction that setting performance standards would lead to school improvement and to greater accountability, and that involvement of the local community was a productive part of the process. However, the policy developers had failed to select an implementation procedure to operationalize their policy, and at the local level, schools and districts proceeded by trial and error, with resultant inefficiencies and frustrations.

Patricia Walsh's and David Carter's contribution to this section in Chapter 7, draws on an interview study of principals of independent Catholic secondary schools in Australia and quasi-autonomous Catholic secondary schools in New Zealand. Through the eyes of school leaders the efforts to mediate national policies to their staffs and school communities, while maintaining the special character and uniqueness of each school in its context is described. While the principals enjoyed local control, they were obliged to implement a number of reforms required by the national governments of Australia and New Zealand. These were interpreted and implemented quite differently, depending to a large extent on each principal's knowledge of the change process and their willingness and/or ability to take charge of it in directing school-level innovation. This in turn was referenced to change facilitator styles drawing on the relevant literature.

The papers in this section come from four different national settings and educational contexts, but there are emergent strands such as shared values and commitment between those groups vested with power to effect or resist implementation of policy, in order to develop the synergy, or to open the window of opportunity required for successful implementation.

In addition, policy developers need to recognize that policy cannot be simply handed over like a parcel in a cloakroom; there have to be procedures in place to ensure its safe delivery and translation into requisite action. Even where there is a measure of local control, individuals in leadership roles at the local level need shared understandings of the purpose of the innovation, and ways in which it might be achieved to avoid fragmentation, frustration and failure.

Chapter 5

Educational Reform in Israel: An Example of Synergy in Education

Miriam Ben-Peretz

'Educational reform' seems to be a prevalent battle cry in many countries which strive for the improvement, or even the transformation, of human experience. Ginsburg (1991) views educational reform in terms of the processes of ideological and social struggles taking place 'in the context of contradictory economic, political and cultural dynamics' (p. xv). Ginsburg *et al.* (1991) explore the nature of educational reform using equilibrium and conflict paradigms.

The basic assumption of equilibrium is that society is fundamentally consensual, leading to functional integration and stability. From a conflict perspective, change is accompanied by conflict and competition among groups. This chapter presents a view of educational reform based on a different synergetic approach. Synergy is defined in *The Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1973) as follows:

> Combined or correlated actions of a group of bodily organs (as nerve-centres, muscles etc.) hence of mental faculties, of remedies etc. These actions tend to reinforce each other and yield strengthened results. In synergy the whole is assumed to be greater than the sum of its parts.

It is contended that in the process of educational reform one may find combined or correlated actions of a group of factors, or organizations, which may yield desired consequences, even though the basic assumption of the equilibrium paradigm, namely, that society is fundamentally consensual and homeostatic, is lacking. The concept of synergy may apply even in a conflict laden situation.

The following sections of this chapter provide a brief description of a major Israeli educational reform endeavour, involving school restructuring and its analysis, using the synergy approach.

Educational Reform in Israel

In the 1960s in Israel several factors combined to create the need for a major reform of the educational system. At that time the structure of schooling consisted of eight years of elementary schools, which were free, and four years in high schools of which there were various types. Inbar (1981) analyses these in terms of the following factors listed below:

- dissatisfaction with the lack of scholastic rigour during the last two years of elementary schooling;
- a high percentage of failure and dropping out at the post-elementary stage;
- the correlation of school failure with geocultural origin. The rate of failure was highest among students of Asian/African origin (children of Jewish immigrants from North African or Middle Eastern countries);
- elementary schools mostly served specific neighbourhoods and tended to be socially and ethnically homogeneous and segregated.

A committee appointed by the Minister of Education recommended one additional year of full-time compulsory education and the establishment of comprehensive intermediate schools for grades 7–9 during the last three years of compulsory schooling. Through strict re-zoning these newly established schools, which resemble American junior high schools, were expected to become more heterogeneous with respect to their student population.

The Israeli school structure reform had two main aims:

1 improving scholastic achievement; and,
2 increasing social integration.

The reform of the school system was approved by the Israeli Parliament (the Knesset) in 1968. It has been regarded ever since as being compulsory and, in all legal challenges concerning its implementation, the Supreme Court of Israel has ruled in favor of this reform. The integration aspect of the policy of Israeli school reform sought two outcomes:

1 creating equal educational opportunities for all students, diminishing the gap between students from different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds; and,
2 social integration between students of different backgrounds.

Yogev (1989) made a useful distinction between instrumental and symbolic integration. On the one hand, 'instrumental integration' was perceived as focusing on school desegregation through the establishment of intermediate

schools, as a means of improving the academic achievement of students of Asian-African origin in Israel (the so-called 'oriental', 'eastern' students). On the other, in 'symbolic integration', school desegregation was perceived as a national-ideological goal in itself. Bringing students from different backgrounds together in the same school was viewed as a concrete and desirable expression of the important social values of unity and equity. The Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture proclaimed in a 1979 statement:

> . . . the primary merit of the school reform is in its integration power: The mere fact of the students being together, in one educational framework, should be seen as a means of encouraging the unity of the nation. (p. 16)

Whether this ideal was in fact achieved is questionable. In some cases, students from low socio-economic backgrounds who entered a heterogeneous intermediate school were labelled 'students of the reform', thus emphasizing difference instead of promoting unity. Still, in response to criticism of the Ministry's policy, E. Schumueli, the Ministry's general Director, published an article in 1977 entitled *The Reform Has Validated Itself*. In this article it was argued that the intermediate school reform had increased public awareness pertaining to issues of ethnic and social integration as a national goal. It seems, therefore, that implementation of the Israeli school reform served both instrumental and symbolic functions within Israeli society.

Implementation of the Social Reforms

In 1987, Israeli school reform had been fully implemented in 70 per cent of municipalities affecting about 55 per cent of students in the relevant age group. Some major cities did not participate in the implementation process which slowed down noticeably over time. Most communities that had joined the 'reform' were documented and evaluated. Dar and Resh (1988) analysed twelve such studies. Their analysis shows that the process of integration in the intermediate schools has had a positive, consistent, though weak, effect on the scholastic achievement of students of low socio-economic background. Thus it seems that the first goal of the Israeli school reform has at least been partially achieved.

What about the achievement of social integration in Israeli society? One positive sign of integration is that by 1988 the gap between different groups in obtaining 11–12 years of schooling had indeed been closed, although inequalities are still in evidence at the higher education level. Though the school reform has still not been fully implemented, it has had its impact on the daily life of significant numbers of students. Thus, as far

back as 1977 (about ten years after the beginning of the 'reform') about 50 per cent of students of Asian-African origin learned in integrated classes in intermediate schools (Amir and Blass, 1985).

How are the school experiences perceived by the students in integrated classes? Research on the relationship between feelings of deprivation and ethnic integration has yielded some interesting results (Resh and Dar, 1989). Feelings of deprivation on the part of students from different backgrounds (European-American versus Asian-African origin) were compared and, overall, students were found to exhibit a rather low degree of deprivation. To the extent that deprivation was expressed, it was perceived more as a personal deprivation in school, whereas the ethnic group was perceived as being more deprived in future societal contexts. Students of Asian-African origin did express a higher degree of deprivation in all the dimensions studied, but differences between the two ethnic groups were small. Regression analysis revealed that 'ethnic origin plays virtually no role in explaining personal feelings of deprivation in or outside of the school . . . in this domain, feelings of deprivation are mainly affected by the intellectual factor' (*ibid*, p. 190). On the other hand, though, ethnic origin was found to affect fraternalistic feelings of deprivation. According to Resh and Dar (*ibid*), students of Afro-Asian origin express a higher degree of group deprivation with regard to their teachers' treatment and to their group life chances in society.

Classroom composition has almost no effect on these feelings, except in non-integrated classes, with a majority of Afro-Asian students coming from a lower socio-economic background. These results may lead one to the conclusion that the Israeli school reform yielded fairly positive results, though its process of implementation seemed to have been arrested by the 1980s and into the 1990s.

The next section of this chapter discusses the nature and role of synergy in seeking to account for the rise and fall of the 1968 school reform policy.

Synergy and the Process of School Reform

As alluded to above, synergy refers to the co-ordination and combination of a number of factors collectively yielding reinforced and cumulative results. In the case of Israeli school reform agenda, what were these factors and how did they interact? No less than eleven different ones can be shown to have been involved in the implementation of intermediate school reform. These factors can be grouped as follows:

- central and local authorities, i.e., Ministry of Education, Parliament, local municipal authorities;
- stakeholders, i.e., teacher organizations, principals, teachers, and parents;

- factors external to the school system i.e., political parties; the Supreme Court; scientists; institutes of teacher education.

The changing interactions between these factors may be seen to promote, or otherwise, hinder the implementation of school reform policies. The first bodies to formulate and outline the policy were governmental authorities and the Knesset (Parliament). In Israel the change process started with the appointment of a public committee by the Ministry of Education. The ensuing 'reform' was approved in 1968, after a lengthy process of deliberation and conflict. The main opposition came from the Elementary School Teachers Union, which interpreted it as a threat to its power. Elementary school teachers became alert to the potential loss of their professional status through the creation of the new institution of the intermediate school. Municipal authorities were made responsible for the implementation of the 'reform' assisted by the central educational budget.

The first implementation phase took place during the reign of a Labor government in which local authorities run by the Labor Party were the first to launch the innovation. The response of parents to this initiative was mixed. In some cases parents were firm advocates of the reform, especially concerning its elements of social integration. Klein and Eshel (1980) portray the manner and form of the involvement of upwardly mobile parents in low-income neighbourhoods, asserting their demands for integrated schools for their children. These scholars report that,

> . . . the parents of the low-income neighbourhoods made every effort to give their case the widest possible publicity, any sign of rejection, delay, or procrastination met with the escalating demands and threats of political and legal action. (p. 15)

Though in that case the demand was for integration at the elementary school age level.

Other groups of parents organized themselves against the reform (Inbar, 1981). Many parents kept a low profile throughout this discussion, mainly because 'in the case of the Israeli educational reform, the administrative, economic, and rationalized decisions did not clash with the politically feasible decisions', (*ibid*, p. 21). In other words, these decisions did not clash with the avowed societal and egalitarian ideals of equality and social integration. Yogev (1989) argued, on the basis of his content analysis of articles on school reform in Israeli newspapers, that 'the public view corresponds to the shifts in educational policies', (p. 74).

Where there were cases of legal opposition several Supreme Court decisions ruled in favour of the initiative. The judicial system thus played a normative role in the implementation process. Another important factor outside the school system which served to shape the reform was researchers

and scholars (Klein and Eshel, 1980; Yogev, 1989). Yogev claimed that Israeli researchers have 'adopted the school desegregation principle as a major yardstick for evaluating the contribution of the school system to equal opportunity', (p. 78). According to Yogev their research helped sustain the school integration policy when it shifted from an instrumental to a symbolic phase.

The implementation of the reform policy bore some concrete outcomes in many localities. As of 1987, for example, the school reform was implemented in eighty-four local authorities, and 285 new intermediate schools had then been established. As the map of the educational system changed, principals and teachers became *committed* to the reform policy. Gottlieb (1989) argued that 'once the school reform was accepted, the Teachers' Union cooperated in its implementation, since they saw it as contributing towards professionalisation and the satisfaction of higher salary demands', (p. 326).

How was professionalization to be achieved? The solution was assumed to lie in improved teacher education programs. According to Gottlieb (1991),

> . . . the common denominator of reform rhetoric in Israel is similar to that in the United States: the assumption that education would improve if teaching were improved. (p. 326)

The changes in teacher education which were perceived as necessary to accommodate the school reform policy were mainly carried out in teacher education institutions controlled by the Ministry of Education. The Commission of Higher Education appointed a committee to develop a framework for 'academizing' teacher education. In 1981, the committee recommended the inauguration of BEd programs, and the conversion of suitable teacher education institutions into colleges granting the BEd degree to teachers. The implementation of this innovation in teacher education complemented the school restructuring. It recruited teachers for the intermediate schools and trained them for their new role. Many former elementary teachers returned to the newly established colleges, or to schools of education in universities, to study for a BA, or MA degree.

At the same time new curricula were developed for the intermediate schools in all subject areas under the guidance of the Ministry of Education. Consequently, many teachers and university scholars became involved in what was an intensive process of curriculum development and thus the circle was completed. The reform policy initiated by central authorities, moved through phases of inventions and opposition, but nevertheless reached the schools. School needs stimulated curriculum development and revisions to teacher education programs which, in turn, fed the ongoing implementation of school reform and restructuring.

The Synergy Model of School Reform

Is it possible to understand the Israeli process of school reform based on equilibrium or conflict approaches? According to Paulston (1977), educational reform is the result of the interactions between society and its schools. From this point of view, schools are assigned the task of meeting societal needs. New roles may be required and these are given effect by schools introducing changes in their educational structure. Changes in society then emerge as a result of the new educational functions taken on by schools.

This scenario is based on an equilibrium paradigm which Ginsburg (1991) analyses in the following terms:

> The education system, as part of a larger homeostatic consensual social system is seen to evolve as society evolves or to adapt as functional incompatibilities or dysfunctions arise. . . . The timing and focus of reform of the education subsystem are determined by the needs of society to maintain an equilibrium in a homeostatic system undergoing change in other sub systems. (pp. 9–10)

The school reform in Israel as it eventuated did not reflect such a consensual, homeostatic situation. Not only was the new policy strongly contested before it was finally adopted officially, but its implementation was hampered by strong opposition, especially by that of parents. The slowing down of the implementation process over time can be explained by the political reversal in 1977, when the right-wing parties were able to form the first non-Labor government since the establishment of the State of Israel. The new government channelled funds to neighbourhood renewal programs rather than continuing to support the educational reform which had been started by former Labor governments.

Equilibrium approaches do not account for these events, though, as Ginsburg (1991) stated 'Power is certainly not a concept alien to equilibrium tradition' (p. 26). Conflict may even be understood as functional in classifying the nature of structures and values in society. Still, conflict perspectives may be better suited for the timing and focus of educational reform. According to Ginsburg (1991) the issue is not whether overt conflict in fact occurs, but whether the interests of different groups in society are inherently and fundamentally in conflict.

The history of the school reform in Israel does not seem to accord with this view. The reform policy was surrounded by conflict, but none of it could justifiably be thought to represent inherent and fundamental contradictions. The Teachers' Union objected to the 'reform' for reasons of professional status, and not because of any inherent disagreement with the basic ideology of creating intermediate schools. Parents may have resisted the implementation process, believing that school integration would

lower achievement, but they still tended to adhere to the underlying principles of social integration and equity. Even when the new government took office in 1977 it did not disengage itself completely from the reform policy, although it initiated different plans for addressing poverty and social inequalities.

From the foregoing discussion it can be seen that neither equilibrium, nor conflict, approaches seem to provide us with a complete and valid interpretation of Israeli school reform. Let us turn, therefore, to another approach, namely, to synergy as an explanatory construct for understanding the phenomenon of school reform. Hunt (1992) uses synergy as an appropriate construct for viewing personal and institutional renewal through the sharing of experiences. But synergy may also be considered to serve as an appropriate framework in accounting for the process of school reform. In this context it is contended that the complex interaction of the many factors involved yields results which cannot be accounted for by simply weighing the potential impact of each factor by itself.

In the case already described, the establishment of intermediate schools in Israel provided important leverage for further policies promoting social integration. As the various factors entered the planned change arena they contributed to the development of new modes and sites of change. Each emerging conflict, each new obstacle to be surmounted, provided an impetus for yet another aspect of the reform. The change in teacher education programs may be viewed, on the one hand, as an institutional response to the firm opposition of the Teachers' Union. On the other, the new modes of teacher education that followed became influential and decisive factors in enabling practitioners to deal successfully with the external demands of the new educational environment.

Central and local authorities may clash over issues of autonomy versus control, but, in many cases, these seemingly opposed forces yielded highly successful implementation outcomes by complementing each other's efforts, though not necessarily accommodating either's goals or modes of action. When the central government, as the main driving force, appeared to lose interest in the reform this synergetic process was truncated.

The story of Israel's school reform is not finished at this point. One of its most important outcomes concerns the observed change in the educational climate. Because the original goals of the reform focused on promoting excellence and equity, improved schooling and social integration, new standards for evaluating the educational system have become established. Even in localities where the school reform has not been implemented the spirit of the reform has become part of the everyday thinking of educators.

The creation of the intermediate school in Israel was essentially a structural change, but its immediate impact reached far beyond the immediate reform policy. In the process of accepting and integrating the new

form of school organization into the education system, politicians, educators, scholars and parents also came to accept the notion of heterogeneous, integrated, classes as a viable and valuable component of school life in seeking valued social goals. It has been argued throughout this chapter that this can be attributed to the additive influence of a complex of contingent factors which in sum exemplify the operation of synergy in action.

Chapter 6

Evolution of Intentions: From State Policy Development to Teacher Implementation

Jim Lowham

Gene Hall and Shirley Hord (1987) together with Michael Fullan (1991) have been at pains to remind us that change is a process and not an event, yet confusion regarding this truism tends to occur when a proposed change is officially adopted. Change, however, cannot be marked by the date that a governing body gives effect to it by simply voting for a policy. Rather it needs to be conceived of as a process in which individuals actually operationalize policy.

Hall and Hord (1987), as well as McDonnell (1991) and McLaughlin (1987), have called for studies of the continuum from policy development to practice. While there is an extensive research domain focused upon policy development and another focused upon the many aspects of implementation, there are few published studies that attempt to bridge these research bases.

In the study of complex organizations, Weber (1946), Wilson (1887), and Taylor (1911) established the foundation for understanding bureaucracies from a purely organizational viewpoint in which every task was fitted into some sort of job description. Policy makers made policy, and implementors implemented it. Further, the making of policy and its implementation was regarded as a series of sequential events which could be rationally planned and scheduled. From this perspective, decisions involving implementation were regarded as being essentially non political and technical (Nakamura and Smallwood, 1980). The bureaucracy was top-down with minimal discretionary decision making residing outside the top echelon. Within this organizational pattern, individual human elements, and those of a political or sociological nature, were of no concern to the administrator.

This model, separating administration from politics, was adhered to until Paul Appleby openly questioned the preceding fifty or so years, in which there was a clear separation of politics from administration, when he published *Policy and Administration* in 1949 (Nakamura and Smallwood,

1980). Appleby argued that a policy is constructed when it is actually applied, because it is here that the implementor must translate it from the more abstract statement of words into the concrete actions of practice. Consequently, implementation was likely to be more complex than the classical, scientific model implied, as evidenced by the work of Pressman and Wildavsky (1984).

With the benefit of hindsight we now have a much clearer picture of the complexities of implementation; the evolution of which Odden (1991) has delineated as three stages as follows:

Stage 1 From the mid-1960s until the mid-1970s in which research addressed the conflict in policy implementation.

Stage 2 From the mid-1970s when researchers evaluated the results of fifteen years of implementation research by asking such questions as whether programs could be implemented in compliance with the original design and intent.

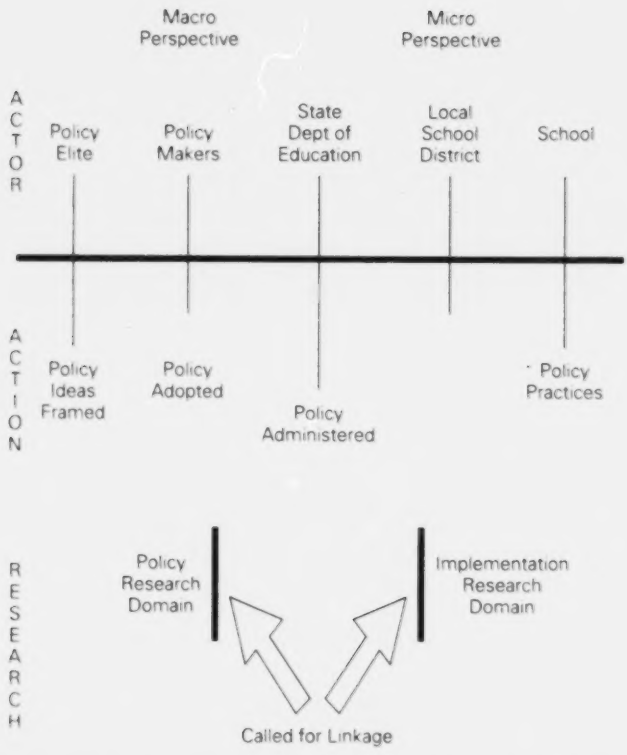
Stage 3 From the mid-1980s, when research questioned whether the programs actually implemented could have the intention, quality, force, and results that underlay the policy.

This chapter describes a case-study based upon an implementation continuum which commences with policy development and ends with practice. In so doing it seeks to reduce the gap between the research bases of policy development and implementation. Specifically, it examines the development of problems associated with school improvement and school accountability and the actions of actors ranging from the state policy makers to the teachers who put the policy into practice at their local school sites. An alternative policy presented by a group of policy makers was designed to solve certain emergent problems that had become apparent. Implementation of a solution, however, necessitated that both the practitioners and the context in which they practiced would have to undergo a transformation.

There were two common threads interwoven throughout the study reported here. One was transparent until data from the continuum were analysed. But only when the data gathered from multiple components were structured and ordered did the common threads begin to emerge. Late in the analysis this became evident when viewed within the conceptual framework of an all encompassing system. A particular thread, that gave coherence to the data, was the similarity of action woven within each level from policy maker to teacher. This, however, would not have been revealed if only one component of the continuum had been the focus of study. Figure 6.1 illustrates the Policy-into-Practice Continuum which was used to guide and inform this study.

The major sections of this chapter are organized around the nature of the study in the context of planned change, including the method and data

Figure 6.1: The Policy-into-Practice Continuum



collected. This is followed by a section of emerging hypotheses and concepts. The chapter concludes with a summary of the implications of this study for policy development and implementation and suggests some possibilities for further research.

Profiling Intentions: 'The School Accreditation Rule'

The research reported here followed the evolution of certain problems of school improvement and accountability, which were traced from policy development at the state level to teacher classroom practice, in one sparsely populated state of the western United States. It investigated the development of the problem and an accompanying policy solution; the communication of the policy through the bureaucracy from the state level to the school; and, finally, its implementation by teachers.

Most of the action studied was focused upon the concerns of school

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improvement and accountability and the policies to address these which took place mainly in the 1980s. The concerns of the policy makers did not become apparent overnight, but once they did more individuals became involved and the level of action snowballed. As the concerns grew and became public, some state legislative-level policy makers attempted to enact one policy while the Chief State Schools Officer (CSSO) and the State Board of Education (SBE) policy makers attempted to enact another solution. The net result was two differing policies being enacted within a matter of days — one policy by legislative action and one by policy action through the SBE.

Both groups of policy makers viewed their policies in quite different terms, but their enactment and common focus entwined them in the eyes of many practitioners. In effect, implementation was accomplished by a meshing of the two policies through the selection of certain components drawn from each where they appeared to be compatible. There were some practitioners, however, who interpreted the intentions of the policies one way, while in other school districts, the same intentions were interpreted quite differently.

This situation can be characterized in terms of a Weberian bureaucratic policy-making system from policy development into implementation. Here, each actor receives the work from his or her superior and proceeds to perform the assigned function. Once the assigned function is completed the work is then passed to another subordinate for further action. In this study, it was obvious that the various levels of the system were fulfilling their roles discretely and with a great deal of independence. Using a scientific metaphor, it appeared to the onlooker as if there was a funnel lined with a filter between each component of the system. Within each local school district studied, the desirable pieces of the policy were used as levers to encourage or strengthen changes that were already part of the agenda for change. Those which generally aligned with current practices or interests were taken as being the important elements of policy, while others were screened out.

The policy jointly developed by the CSSO and the SBE, entitled 'The School Accreditation Rule', required more implementation effort on the part of local school districts, schools, and teachers than the parallel policy enacted by the state legislature. This phenomenon, together with those who developed and implemented it, became the primary focus for the case study reported here.

Design Considerations

Individuals who, and organizations which, developed the solutions and implemented the policy were divided into four groups. These consisted of the policy makers themselves; the State Department of Education (SDE); local school districts; and individual schools. Participants at each level were

selected by positional, relational, and reputational analyses and, upon their initial selection, were asked to nominate other participants. Both the local school districts and the schools within them were selected by means of a modified Delphi technique (Whitman, 1990).

Data collection began with identifying SDE personnel using positional analysis. All but one of the individuals selected had worked for the department for more than fifteen years and, for at least part of this time, each had been assigned a position in the School Improvement Unit. Those finally selected had a definite perspective regarding whom they thought was critical to the school improvement and school accountability process, and what individuals had accomplished in relation to these areas. The SDE participants in turn nominated the policy makers.

Two local school districts were selected for study. One was identified by SDE participants as representative of districts that had accomplished more than might be expected concerning change efforts. This district is identified as district M. Similarly, the second, identified as district A, represented those that had effected a fairly typical change implementation effort. In each of these, the superintendent and one further official, with responsibilities for the implementation of district policy, participated in the research. Within each selected district, the two district level participants identified two schools using a modified Delphi technique. The schools met similar criteria to those of the two districts selected for study and within each school the principal and two teachers also participated in the study. In each participating school the principal nominated two teachers, one of whom had accomplished more than the norm in effecting change and one who was about average in that regard.

Other individuals were identified as participants by means of a nomination protocol or through the use of positional analysis. The State Governor and two legislators were interviewed at length about their perspectives on, and roles in, the development of the policy. One further legislator and one further superintendent were interviewed in order to authenticate information gained from other interviewees.

The spectrum of participants ranged from policy makers to practitioners and allowed for a comprehensive story to emerge concerning the development of policy and the intentions behind it. The Policy-to-Practice Continuum, illustrated in Figure 6.1, guided and informed the research such that problems of studying policy development without examining policy implementation and vice versa were avoided.

The order for conducting the interviews was initially with the SDE personnel charged with school improvement. These were followed by policy makers, then district level participants, followed by those in two schools within the district. This order was repeated with personnel in a second school district and then in two schools within it. Follow-up interviews and interviews of individuals nominated but conducted independently of this sequence were also conducted.

A semi-structured interview protocol was used and supporting documentation was gathered. Verbatim transcriptions of the interviews were coded using 'The Ethnograph' text analysis software package (Seidel, Kjolseth, and Seymore, 1988). Analyses were completed using the techniques of open, axial, and selective coding (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Data Summaries and Interpretation

In this section, the data are summarized under policy-makers' stories, the SDE stories, and stories from the local school districts.

The Policy-Makers' Stories

The office of Chief State Schools Officer was created through the State Constitution. The incumbent is one of five officials elected every four years in state-wide races. The Governor appoints, with legislative confirmation, the eleven members of a State Board of Education for single six year terms. The offices of the SBE and the SDE were created through later legislation and the SDE provides the executive for both the CSSO and the SBE. There had been differences of opinion among the Governor, CSSO, State Legislature, SBE, SDE, and local school districts regarding their power, roles, and functions with respect to the conduct of education.

Local control of public schools had been an issue in the United States since the mid-1800s (Katz, 1971), and this state was no different from the rest. Local control was a current issue at the time the State Constitution was drafted; during the period 1913–1919, and again in the 1980s. Local control as an issue was frequently mentioned by participants at every level and the strength of this was evident during an interview when Deputy Chief State Schools Officer (DCSSO) related:

> We couldn't even get data from the districts; they'd say, 'I'm not going to do it, don't intrude into my district.' So we couldn't even get data on some of the things we thought the State Department should collect and that other state departments did.

This complex of interactions between governor, CSSO, SBE, SDE, and local school districts has led to widespread confusion about the locus of authority, responsibility, and function.

When the Governor was asked where the State Board of Education would be shown on an organizational chart of the bureaucracy, he said:

> In limbo. It is an organization that has struggled with itself all of the time I have been here, and as near as I can determine, for its

> entire history. It has never been quite sure of its role, of its power, who it reported to, or what was expected of it. It continues, as we speak, to struggle with that. The interesting part about it, it transcends personalities of Governors, Superintendents, and Board of Education members. It is populated by remarkable people who, as a group, can't quite figure out what they are doing.

On taking up office for what was to be twelve years of service, the CSSO appointed a deputy who served until nearly the end of the former's tenure. In concert they took their perceived charge to improve schools seriously, and moved to develop an action agenda to put this into effect using the tools they controlled. The State Superintendent expressed her commitment by saying:

> I felt school improvement was the whole tenor of why I had been elected . . . By improvement of schools, I mean improvement of student performance. . . . But, just as schools looked at the State Department of Education as an impediment, we looked at the Legislature as an impediment.

By 1988, the relationships among legislators and the State Superintendent were described by one legislator as 'open warfare'. The Governor and the CSSO belonged to the same party; however, the Governor was more closely aligned with the Legislature concerning education. As the Governor stated at interview, 'There was clearly big time tension between the Legislature and the Superintendent's office.'

Throughout the history of the state, the CSSO, SBE, and SDE have been responsible for school accreditation and some degree of operational oversight, while the Legislature and the Governor have been responsible for ensuring the funding of public schools. These issues became more entwined in the mid-1980s when, after a period of increasing revenues, the state was faced with a financial downturn which coincided with school improvement becoming a popular topic. The tensions which ensued led to the blurring of a number of roles and responsibilities.

By the early 1980s, the CSSO and the DCSSO believed that the extent approach to accreditation was inadequate. They had lost confidence in the existing accreditation process as a tool of school improvement. A consultant in the SDE who made several of these visits classified them as 'coffee cup visits'. The DCSSO related that in the late 1970s there were no written standards for the visits, 'In other words, they were implied by the questions the teams were asking the local district.' At interview the CSSO asserted:

> We recognized early on that the two great instruments we had for improving the quality of education were educators' certification

> and school accreditation. Those are the big hammers, the power, that the state has. So we attacked the issue of educators' certification, and then moved on to school accreditation.

Within the SDE, efforts were made to increase the rigor of on-site visits and to develop standards and checklists for teams to use while conducting on-site visitations for school accreditation purposes. Statutes were the major source of the information for the checklists. The visit had

> . . . a twofold purpose, that of helping district personnel analyse the strengths and weaknesses of the district's schools and that of determining the accreditation status of each school in terms of the rules and regulations. . . . (State Department of Education, 1988)

By the mid-1980s, districts received on-site accreditation visits every three years. Prior to the visits of an accreditation team, the checklists were made available to districts for staff perusal. The number of people in a team depended upon the size of the district being visited but it generally comprised of fewer than ten members. Each visit tended to last for two to four days and each school in the district was visited. Accreditation for the intervening years was determined from reports submitted to the SDE.

In spite of these efforts, throughout the 1980s there was a groundswell of concern that the schools were not being improved by on-site visitations. This surfaced inside the SDE and also among the districts being visited. The checklists were quite extensive, but were frequently charged with being compliance-oriented and stereotyped by an item that referred to 'whether the flag was flying' (State Department of Education, 1988).

By 1987, pressure was growing among the legislators, the CSSO, the DCSSO, and others in the field to do something about school improvement and/or the accreditation process. Other pressures were building up including the call for more and better analysed data (Legislative Service Office, 1988). There were no data to either support or refute that the education system was performing poorly; however, an audit of the SDE announced the fairly common perception, that education was not of a uniformly high quality in all areas or districts.

Even with the increased attention that education and school improvement attracted from various government officials, alternatives to current practice were not readily forthcoming. References were made to things that could be done. The topic of data collection and analysis appeared frequently in informed debate and a growing call for some type of state-wide assessment began to assert itself. Accompanying this public discontent was an awareness that no one could identify which districts or programs were achieving results. The legislature responded to the pressure to do something by forming a committee to study education.

The Policies are Developed

As one legislator, who was interviewed for this study, said, 'We do not have an education policy in this state, either as to what we expect out of schools or want out of schools.' The legislator continued:

> From my perspective, [the committee] came up as a routine dodge by the Education Committee because they did not have a cohesive approach about how they wanted to deal with education. The way the legislative system works, unless the committee has a pretty good idea of where they are going, nothing goes on with this type of issue. It is too complex and far reaching.

By 1989 both groups were well into a policy development operation which culminated in the spring of 1990 with policies being adopted. The legislation outlined a series of goals that the SBE was to adopt and report on to the next Legislature. In addition, school districts were to publish report cards for public scrutiny. The SBE duly reported about the goals to the next Legislature. Some participants vented their emotions during the process of reporting, but nevertheless the report was given as directed. Since the legislation only called for a report during the next session, no further reports were tabled nor have they been asked for.

The SBE adopted a new school accreditation rule requiring that schools and school districts set performance standards necessary for graduation. Local school districts and the schools within them were required to involve parents and community members in the process of setting standards. While broad, discipline-related areas, in which standards were required were outlined, local districts and schools were given the freedom to set the standards they wished as long as the community was involved in the process.

The SBE was responsible for school accreditation and the Legislature was responsible for school finance. The rift between the groups and financial problems with the state's budget resulted in a new school accreditation rule being adopted, but no additional finances were made to support its implementation. The task force responsible for developing the rule had previously discussed resources and in the words of one committee member:

> There was discussion about that, but the finding of the resources didn't seem to be a charge of the committee. I got that they [State Department of Education] were going to hunt up resources to help schools change. That came up, but we said, 'In the long run, that's in the hands of the Joint Appropriations Committee'.

Another committee member who also served in the school improvement unit of the SDE noted:

> I remember discussing resources and whether our timing of a new accreditation was feasible since monetary resources to buy teacher time, consultants, new materials, new assessment tools, etc., were rapidly disappearing. The task force and the State Board of Education decided that if we waited for perfect conditions to propose change we would wait forever.

The Governor spoke of the ease in developing public policy when compared with the difficulty of implementing it. He stated that it is relatively easy to develop public policy, but difficult to implement in both the short and long term because it is most likely to be affected by intervening dynamics. It was not possible to wait for better times. If the CSSO, DCSSO, and the SBE wanted to adopt the policy, it needed to do so now because another election was near and everyone believed that it would be a difficult campaign and race to win.

The State Department of Education Stories

At the SDE level the policy developed by the Legislature was virtually ignored. Besides the rift between the SBE and the Legislature, the goals that the SBE was directed to set did not involve the SDE, and the report cards that had been mandated for publication had to be developed and published by local school districts.

The SBE's school accreditation rule did require some action from the Education Department, but it did not direct or even suggest that the latter should become involved with the process of setting the performance standards. However, employees in the school accreditation unit of the SDE were approached for assistance by some local school districts. Additionally, some of these individuals were involved with the CSSO's and DCSSO's efforts to disseminate the school accreditation rule throughout the State. Some workshops were held and some committees were formed, but, overall, the districts were to set their own standards and the SDE let the districts do so.

A member of the school improvement unit of the SDE, who was also a member of the committee that developed the school accreditation rule had this to say:

> I see the relief coming from, again, getting out of the old system into something different. I see it as probably a justification to start implementing some of the other things that we want to do. I'm looking at higher level thinking skills that we talk about . . . that it is helping to legitimize some of the educational reforms or movements or things that we've always believed in. . . . I guess I am at the point that I would rather see a failure in something than

> just people not doing anything. Try it. If it doesn't work, you're probably better off finding out than simply staying caught up in the status quo. . . . We believed in it, we just didn't know how to do it. There are many things I would like to see happen in a classroom that as a practitioner I can't do. I don't have the skills to do them. I don't know how to do them, but, that doesn't mean that if we legitimize them that we can't attempt to do them.

As the time for the policies to be implemented approached the Legislature wanted something done to increase public accountability. The CSSO, the DCSSO, and the SBE wanted to improve schools and regarded the new protocol for school accreditation as the best approach to take. Money was not appropriated for either the legislated course of action nor the course that the SBE selected but, irrespective of this, it was sensed as the time to act. The DCSSO recalled,

> I'd hoped that the districts, at least some of them, would realise the potential of the standards. If [the CSSO] lost the election, then the standards would have been in place for seven or eight months and it would be hard to bomb them out. In other words, I thought a year would pass before they [the Legislature] met.

Additionally, certain SDE employees attributed the driving force for a new accreditation rule, at least in part, to politics and the re-election campaign. One SDE employee commented:

> Well, I'm pretty confident that you're going to find we did it for reform. There's no doubt about it, but we did it for politics too. They had to come up with something that looked good to the public in order to get re-elected for that fourth term. School finance was on the back burner at the time, which is basically the other alternative. Both those reasons were there. It was not all altruism and improvement, it wasn't.

Another SDE employee asserted:

> I think some of it was political to get [the CSSO] re-elected again by talking about local control, local control, local control. It had no definitions, no State standards, no State direction. I think that was political . . . to a point.

The Stories of the Practitioners

Both the legislative requirements and a new school accreditation process were adopted within days of each other such that the districts and schools

would have to implement both simultaneously. The Legislature required the publishing of local school district report cards. The SBE's school accreditation process required a shift to performance standards developed through a broad-based community approach, and far more emphasis upon school-based decision making than had been the case with the previous policy.

The policies implied no specific innovations to be implemented. Performance standards did have to be set for several knowledge domains, but beyond this over-arching requirement very little guidance was provided. The districts were given the freedom to effect standards with the caveat that there had to be a broad base of community involvement including teachers, staff, parents and other community members.

A number of districts had been working with some of the policymakers intentions regarding the school accreditation rule. One of these districts, identified as district M, had been selected as having done more toward implementation than the norm early in 1993. Other districts had responded by initiating work at the same time as the school accreditation rule was adopted and included district A.

The student populations of district M and district A were within 5 per cent and the numbers of teachers within 1 per cent of each other. The student demographics of the two districts were also similar with per student funding in district A at $4,648 and in district M $5,289. Both districts had identified one official as responsible for implementation of the two policies and in both districts the superintendent was involved with implementation, but with the superintendent of district M involved to a greater extent than district A. He regarded the school accreditation rule as a means of assisting his district look more like a unified district rather than an association of separate schools. He represented his view this way:

> Over and over again, we talk about looking like a district. When we talk about looking like a district, we really talk about aligned outcomes K-12. It's our philosophy that for quality to really be achieved, we have got to have skills taught in kindergarten that enhance the skills taught in first grade, and enhance skills taught in second grade. We're having teachers teach wonderful things, but we don't know where they fit in the whole K-12 spectrum. . . . We maintain, and I think the teachers actually agree, that with six elementary schools, we're producing six different products. We feed those six different products into two middle schools. The middle schools take three products and channel them into one. We feed two products into the high school, and then finally, we produce one product at the end of that system. We need to be feeding one similar set of skills from the elementary schools into the middle schools and from the middle schools into the high school. So it's really looking like a district . . .

In complete contrast to this, the superintendent of district A perceived the school accreditation rule as a device which would require his district's schools to be different. The assistant superintendent described this perspective as:

> . . . the real recognition that schools must be responsive to their community and the involvement of our community people, not just parents, but community people, in school is a critical piece in the accreditation standards. . . . I think we're clearly recognizing we can't do it without parental support and/or community support. We're reaching out more deliberately, more consciously. [We're] trying to encourage the participation of our community in a whole variety of ways, as little advisory panels or simply show up and help us out. If you walked around this district, you'd see a whole variety of approaches being used.

The superintendent believed that then the needs and backgrounds of students of the individual schools were taken into consideration the schools would look more different than alike. Apart from the time the two districts had been working upon different aspects of the school accreditation rule, it was this observed difference in the districts' foci that accounted for much of the difference observed in the two districts. District M allocated many of its resources of time and money in trying to find an approach which would give them a district focus, while district A allocated many of its resources to the schools with very little guidance concerning how to utilize them.

The teachers and principals of district M were experiencing a great deal of frustration in trying to develop district-wide performance standards. One principal noted:

> We've been working toward them [performance standards] and a curriculum forever. For all nine years that I've been here. I was determined last August to take over the language arts and get a curriculum in place by April. It won't be done. (We made) a little bit of progress. . . . We still weren't looking at the nuts and bolts part, the student actually demonstrating skills. We were looking at writing some kind of curriculum that led toward mastery, but we were ending up with things like introductions.

The teachers of district A had not arrived at the point of developing district-wide performance standards. Although a district-wide curriculum existed, it was not written in these terms. The assistant superintendent of district A concluded:

> As I sit back and observe some of these things, we typically get to that point of being able to express concerns, but we don't go

> much further with that so we get stuck. . . . It hasn't been so difficult for us to identify what we need to teach. Our problem now becomes how can we deliver all the goods in the time that we have and how can we do that in an integrative fashion with our student populations? How can we measure with some success and provide the acceptable evidence to those who care that our kids really did learn something?

In both districts there were multiple participants at all levels who, like the committee that developed the school accreditation rule, believed that performance standards developed through broad-based community sources could and would improve schools. In neither district was the wider community involved in the development of standards, but in both districts participants believed that the community, especially parents, should be involved. Many participants expressed their interest in becoming involved, but only when the process was better developed and the standards a little more definite. A participant from district A noted:

> I think the administrators idealistically have always spoken the rhetoric 'let's have parental involvement', but never did anything about it. . . . [We are] trying to orchestrate that after twenty-four years of an isolation factor from parents, even though we always, in a rhetorical sense, recognized that parents played an important role. We kind of said 'Get away from us! We'll do our thing!'

Doubtless the community was more involved in the schools than was previously the case. There were parents running copy and laminating machines, acting as librarians, volunteering as teacher aides, and raising funds for the school. So whenever the question was asked about community and parental involvement, the answer was always that parents are already involved now more than ever, but they were not involved where it counted most in setting the standards.

Broad-based community involvement in the setting of the performance standards was one of the most important intentions of the school accreditation rule. It was the means by which the CSSO, the DCSSO, and the SBE believed that there would be an increase in accountability as well as school improvement. The intention had been deflected from accountability to helping schools cope with an ever decreasing amount of funding being made available to accomplish the support tasks needed to operate a school.

None of the participants at the local school district or school levels had any disparaging comments to make about the intention behind the full implementation of the school accreditation rule. In both districts, many people had dedicated numerous hours to implementing it. In both districts, participants identified things happening, but there was evident

frustration in not knowing how to operationalize the agenda behind the rule. The assistant superintendent of district A summarized the position, as follows:

> . . . I think we're wasting a heck of a lot of time because I don't think there's too much new in lots of what we're doing. We ought to be looking at some of the good work that's already out there rather than each district trying to paw through a lot of this itself.

The intentions of the policy makers were couched in philosophical terms while implementation success was a function of local school districts and schools accomplishing the task of developing and implementing performance standards for the students. In other words, the SBE wanted broad-based community involvement in setting performance standards within each school and each local school district, but did not select an innovation to operationalize this intention. Personnel in the SDE also believed in the intention, but they were not sure how to accomplish the task. Ultimately, the realization of the intention fell to the local school districts and schools. On the face of it, the school accreditation rule does not sound too difficult to put in place, but after several years of work on the part of practitioners they were still trying to figure out how to do it.

Tentative Hypotheses and Findings

The following hypotheses and concepts were derived from the data analysis and related literature. With respect to the latter — in particular 'policy windows' (Kingdon, 1984);[1] the nature of paradigms (Kuhr, 1970;[2] Barker, 1992)[3] and the cumulative findings of implementation — research had a formative influence when formulating the hypotheses. They are, however, tentative in nature and scope and should be viewed cautiously since they require further validation. As future studies are conducted, the scope and form of some hypotheses may well enlarge and others become redundant.

Policy Windows

Kingdon (1984) found there were certain times when policy changes could be made readily and others times when the resistive factors were so great that the change in policy could not be effected. He labelled the optimum time when the policy could be changed as the 'policy window'. This occurred when three sets of thoughts or actions flowing through the bureaucracy, namely, the Problem Stream[4], the Alternative Stream, and the

Political Stream, coalesced. Policy windows open infrequently and do not remain open very long. Because of this, those who want to change policy and those who develop policy must be ready to take advantage of a policy window when it opens. The emerging hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1

Significant change in an organization will take place only when the policy window is open.

The policy window is open when the Problem Current, Alternative Current, and Political Current are in confluence. A corollary to this is that this is the only time a paradigm shift will take place. Further, the currents tend to remain in confluence for brief, but presently unpredictable, periods of time.

Hypothesis 2

When two of the three currents merge, limited change may take place.

On these occasions, changes that do occur will not be as significant as those when all three currents flow together. Two corollaries follow from this hypothesis. The first is that change will occur when one of the two streams that merge is the Alternative Current. However, the nature of the change will be a paradigm enhancement, diffusion of the innovation will be slow, and dissemination will be resource intensive. The second corollary is that when the Problem and the Political Currents merge, but the Alternative Current does not, resources will be committed to locating an alternative and implementation of many innovations may be undertaken with the hope that at least one of the innovations may solve at least part of the problem. In this situation, frustration of those supporting or facilitating the change will be high, and progress in finding an alternative will be slow.

Hypothesis 3

Intentions evolve as a policy moves through the continuum.

The evolution of policy intentions are more rapid when they are defined philosophically, rather than operationally, or by targeting a specific innovation. The evolution is also greater when the intentions must be communicated between networks, especially when these are few and links between the networks are weak.

Hypothesis 4

When an intention is defined philosophically, it is modified in each sub-system to solve, or partially solve, a problem that has been recognized by the individuals in the sub-system.

When an intention is defined philosophically, the implementors must develop an operational definition before implementation. An operational definition results in the development of an innovation, the adaption of an innovation, or the adoption of an innovation. In each case, the translation from philosophy to operation facilitates the evolution of the intention.

When the translation is effected at the individual or school level, the local school district, as a sub-system, will manifest multiple operational forms of the innovation being implemented, with different anticipated results, together with varying resource and training requirements at each site. When the translation is done at the district level, the state will experience similar variations in needs for resources, expectations, and results.

Hypothesis 5

Every policy will have a policy elite and the composition of the elite will vary according to the nature of the policy.

Further, any policy that is adopted will have an elite that is composed of individuals with positional power and individuals with knowledge or expertize reputations involving the subject of the policy.

The composition of an elite can be determined by positional analysis and nomination. The inner circle of the elites that are successful in having their policies adopted will include individuals holding positional power.

Hypothesis 6

There will be an implementation network at the level of implementation at which an intention of the policy is being operationalized.

One intention for the school accreditation rule in district M was that the district would 'look like a district', hence there was an implementation network for this intention at the district level. However, in district A, a driving intention was that the schools of district A should look more different than alike. Hence there was not an implementation network at the district level, but implementation networks did exist at the school level.

Emerging Concepts

Three concepts emerged during the study.

1 The Dimensions of the Continuum Exceed Two

The continuum is multi-dimensional and difficult to capture in a two-dimensional figure. Hence, whenever the continuum is reduced to two-dimensional figures and graphics, information is lost. Some of the most critical information includes:

- the effect of time,
- the fluidity of the contents of the continuum,
- the rigidity of the structure of the continuum, and,
- the effects of multi-dimensional flow of information.

2 Paradigms Act as Filters and as Concentrators

Information moved along the continuum in many dimensions. As information moved among the sub-systems, two patterns of changes repeatedly occurred:

- the information was filtered to fit the context of the situation of the receiver,
- the information that passed through the filter was concentrated and emphasized in terms of its perceived meaning for that sub-system.

It appears that networks have a powerful influence upon the paradigms used both by the network and the individuals in the network. This may be especially true when the members perceive the network to be under attack or taking risks. As the boundaries strengthen, the paradigms increase their potential to both filter and concentrate.

3 Systems and Sub-systems

The third concept was that the educational continuum for a given change is only a sub-system of the context in which it exists and not a closed system unto itself. A common phenomenon noted was that participants contemplating the organization in which he or she held power, operated as a system over which they declared a form of ownership. This was true for most participants irrespective of the levels at which they operated. The more the individual expressed a vested interest in the organization, the more this attitude was entrenched.

The viewing of 'my' system as 'the' system seems to account for much of the difficulty in making systemic changes in systems larger than

a few sub-systems. This advances the case for mutual adaptation where both the organization and the innovation undergo interrelated modifications. Where the phenomenon occurs the commitment to the innovation might be high, but it is toward the intentions of the innovation as perceived by the implementor. This concept seems to account substantially for the evolution of intentions as policy moves among the sub-systems. While this concept might be closely related to mutual adaptation, when it is applied to a bureaucratic hierarchy, however, the adaptation occurs at several levels and becomes evolutionary. Hence, the implemented practice may be only distantly related to the original intention.

Furthering a Systems Approach to Understanding

There is a need for more studies in education adopting a systems perspective. The boundaries of a system are extremely difficult to locate and this is what makes an education system difficult to capture. Once a policy is adopted there is a point of termination in policy development and formulation which in turn becomes the point of initiation for implementation studies. Due to the inherent complexities of the system, to study one subsystem or one action of the Policy-into-Practice Continuum, while avoiding other sub-systems, leads predictably to partial understandings and some misunderstandings given the holistic nature of the dynamics at work. (This is illustrated somewhat differently by Miriam Ben-Peretz, using the concept of synergy applied to the Israeli school system, in Chapter 5.)

In our contemporary educational environment, the references to systems and systemic reforms are both frequent and popular. Like most popular terms they generate lives of their own. The definitions of system and sub-system are elusive. There are some obvious entities that need to be included in an education system, for example, teachers and administrators. Beyond these the elements and their linkages becomes less certain. Should students be involved? What about the parents? board of district trustees? teachers' unions? administrators' union? state department of education? accreditation agencies? legislators? communities? businesses? colleges? trade schools? federal officials? universities? publishers? researchers? Obverse to these questions is rather which, if any, of these should *not* be involved in a study of a system?

The alternative is to shirk the endeavor and continue to research and recognize only isolated sub-systems and their narrowly related actions and interactions. The 'pay off' is achieved by focusing on a restricted number of elements in a system whereby knowledge advances within the scope of the selected focus. The cost, unfortunately, is likely to be that knowledge becomes extremely narrow, highly specialized and likely to be only partial in illuminating our understanding of the superordinate requirements of the system and the way it functions. In systems thinking terms, this is a

problem concerning the scale of resolution at which a research problem and its agenda is addressed, and of what is to remain relatively undisturbed in 'black boxes'. If the course of narrowly focused fine-grained knowledge is pursued by sections of the community of scholars, the hope is that others will study contiguous components of the system in a manner which will allow for the relationships to emerge.

Notes

1 Kingdon defined the term *Problem Stream* as the set of conditions that are being experienced and the perception of those conditions. One critical perception that is necessary for a condition to become a problem is that it must be perceived that something should be done about the condition. When a collection of proposals meeting certain criteria exists this is the *Alternative Stream*. The tests that the proposals needed to meet are based on technical feasibility, value acceptability, tolerable cost, reasonable chance for acceptance by the elected official and the public. The third or *Political Stream* is 'composed of such things as public mood, pressure group campaigns, election results, partisan or ideological distributions in Congress, and changes of administration' (p. 152). A critical component of the political current is the national mood. A policy window opens when, ideally, the three currents link up.

2 Thomas Kuhn accorded the term paradigm a number of definitions. One was the '. . . entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on as shared by the members of a given community' (p. 175). Another denoted, 'One sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science' (p. 170).

3 Barker (1992) defined a paradigm as 'a set of rules and regulations (written or unwritten) that does two things: (1) it establishes or defines boundaries; and (2) it tells you how to behave inside the boundaries in order to be successful' (p. 32). Barker's definition takes the term paradigm into areas beyond science and problem solving into everyday life and behaviour.

4 For the purpose of this study, the term 'stream' replaced 'current' since it appeared that the problem, alternative and political thoughts and actions were in the same stream channel, but running at various speeds and frequently in different directions making the term current, rather than stream, the more apt expression.

Chapter 7

Principal Influences on National Policy Implementation in Selected Australian and New Zealand Catholic Schools

Patricia Walsh and David Carter

In the flux of educational reform in Australia and New Zealand, and indeed elsewhere, the wholesale adoption of instrumentalist views of schooling and the curriculum by some opinion leaders, notably politicians, economic rationalists, corporate managers and trainers, has generally precipitated negative responses from educators. Given the religious base of Catholic and many independent schools — which view the individual student in terms of his or her all round development, including the mental, physical, social and spiritual dimensions of being — there is an inherent conflict between the narrowly conceived instrumental values currently being represented at the national and state levels of schooling, and those espoused by the church-based schools as well as those of other faiths in a multi-cultural society.

This Chapter explores how state-mandated education policy is implemented in Catholic secondary schools as viewed through the eyes of their principals. The literature is replete with the importance of the role of the principal and the styles they adopt in managing change (Hall and Hord, 1987; Caldwell, 1992; Hallinger, 1992). School leaders also provide a lens through which the policy demands of the external environment are mediated via school policy, programs, culture and practice.

Starting with a summary description of two major policy statements of national significance, *Strengthening Australia's Schools*, and the New Zealand Government's response to *Administering for Excellence* (popularly referred to as the Picot Report) entitled *Tomorrow's Schools;* selected aspects of the policies they embody are investigated in four Catholic schools via the perceptions of their principals. Cross-cultural comparisons are made regarding the way policy is mediated into practice by each principal in terms of his or her understanding and facilitation of the change process.

A structured interview protocol was used throughout the investigation

in order to elicit information from principals regarding their understanding of the national policy documents and their policy implications, consequent changes at the school level with a specific focus on curriculum and allied practices; equity issues; resources; the monitoring of policy implementation and its impact on students, and school receptivity to change. Structured interview data are summarised and presented as vignettes of each school, and inferences are made about each leader's change facilitation style using the framework and indicators developed by Hall and Hord (1987, pp. 230–42). Policy implementation in each country is briefly compared from the school point of view, and conclusions drawn about change facilitator styles and other influences that seem to promote or inhibit planned change.

National Concerns and Policy Initiatives: Australia

In the 1980s 'The Lucky Country' became 'The Unlucky Country', or so our politicians had us believe as they then sought to locate the origins of the country's economic *malaise* on global forces substantially outside the control of politicians and policy makers and their stewardship of the national economy. In endeavoring to address seemingly intractable economic difficulties, a new form of federalism emerged which was based on the principles of corporate management and known as 'corporate federalism' (Lingard, O'Brien and Knight, 1993). Lingard (1991) locates the rise of corporate federalism in the early beginnings of the previous Hawke Labor Government, which first came to office in 1982 and especially during its post 1987 term, in which the states became more vulnerable to national policy developments by the federal government's ability increasingly to restrict state access to central sources of funding under the rubric of a national agenda for micro-economic reform. Thus:

> It appears that, under corporate federalism, the Commonwealth Government wants to pull to the centre all those aspects of policy central to micro-economic reform and to devolve as far as possible other functions to the states. One result of this tendency has been the creation of national policies geared to the creation of a national economic infrastructure. (Lingard, O'Brien and Knight, 1993, p. 233)

Further, according to these scholars, what might be called a neocorporatist, efficient state strategy has engendered a corporate managerialist reformation of the public service as well as a reformation of commonwealth–state relations in terms of corporate federalism. This internal restructuring of the agencies of the state are a tangible political manifestation of the need to solve Australia's current round of economic problems.

The dilemma of fulfilling public expectations for the maintenance

of high standards of living and adequate social service provision while concurrently reducing costs, places politicians and their economic advisers in a 'no win' position with the public at large. The largest budget allocations for provision of health, education and social welfare services have evidently taken the brunt of the push for cost efficiencies and the pruning back of public expenditure under an economic reform agenda seeking 'more for less'. In vigorous pursuit of this agenda by the federal government, an efficiency imperative based on economic rationalist arguments, narrowly and naively interpreted with respect to the nature of education, has dominated national debate. An offshoot of the redistribution of resources, has been that associated responses in the contemporary social and economic climate have encouraged education to be redefined in essentialist and instrumental terms ultimately to better serve the needs of the labour market.

In seeking to achieve national goals, the government has emphasized a number of priority areas including:

- increasing participation rates in education,
- an emphasis on skills training,
- involving the private sector and trade union representatives in skills education,
- increasing school retention rates,
- improving the overall quality of education.

The achievement of these goals places a heavy emphasis on secondary education, particularly in the later years of schooling, to counter national and personal disadvantage and give credence to educational outcomes now linked to national productivity in an explicit and direct manner.

Strengthening Australia's Schools

John Dawkins became the Federal Minister heading up a newly formed 'megaministry' for, Employment, Education and Training in mid-1987 (the sequence of words in the title is not incidental) and quickly gave notice of his policy intentions by the publication of the document entitled *Skills in Australia*. The following year schools came under the national spotlight of change with the publication of *Strengthening Australia's Schools*.

The Minister focused more clearly on his objectives for schools, in which education was couched in terms of economic rationalist values, framed by notions of a skilled work force to make Australia 'the clever country', and countenanced by a view of education as human capital in which government should invest now in order to realize a return later. This was designed to set the agenda for public debate on the relationship of schools to the economy in which a productive culture was sought:

> Schools are the starting point of an integrated education and training structure in the economy. They provide the foundation on which a well-informed, compassionate and cohesive society is built. They also form the basis of a more highly skilled, adaptive and productive workforce. As skill upgrading and retraining of adults becomes more necessary, so will the quality and nature of schooling received by individuals need to change. It will need to be more adaptable and prepare for lifelong education. (Dawkins, 1988, p. 2)

Strengthening Australia's Schools proposed national goals for education; a national curriculum framework; nationally agreed ways of assessment and reporting; a national core curriculum with particular mandatory subjects and an Asian language for all students to Year 12; a brief reference to equity in education; plus a consideration of other matters including school discipline. Although it was only a slim document, Dawkins' policy statement foreshadowed sweeping and radical changes to schooling, involving among other things a common core curriculum, assessment system, and starting age. In 1987 the State and Commonwealth Education Ministers from the Australian Education Council (AEC), under the rubric of 'The Hobart Declaration' agreed on ten national goals for education. In January of the following year, Cabinet approved Dawkins' scheme. Within the proposed agenda for radical and sweeping changes Lee (1988, p. 6) reports that both government and non-government (Independent and Catholic) education groups were prepared to be involved in the re-assessment of the national thrust and structure of schooling.

The success of this policy to date can be measured in terms of a more direct role for, and involvement by, central government in what had previously been essentially a States and Territories responsibility under the Australian Constitution, in which education is a residual power of the States. It was realized in no small part because of the political climate existing in the late 1980s in which the Federal Labor Government shared its social democratic aspirations with a majority of Labor governments at the state level. Recent electoral changes have witnessed a backlash to what is seen as encroaching centralism by several conservative states in a number of policy areas, and especially in moves towards a national curriculum for schools.

School-based Implementation of National Policies

School A: Coeducational, Outer Suburban

This is the largest school in the region, with an enrolment of 1500 students from Years 7 to 12[1] with some students being drawn from nearby semi-rural

areas, 100 full-time and 37 part-time staff. While the school is dealing with the recent death and injury of students resulting from a bus accident, there is no morale problem stemming from outside pressures. However the Principal is aware of a morale problem in Victorian schools generally as a consequence of the poor state economy, teacher retrenchment and financial pressures.

The Principal was of the opinion that education and politicians were not a good mix. In his view, while the current national policy agenda may sound educational, it is very much based on economic rationalism. Dawkins' policy represented a perception by the government that Australia, with its significant position on the Asian rim, was going backwards economically. Current federal policies were an attempt by politicians to show that they were concerned about the situation. This has led to the tremendous shift from liberal to vocational education; in which the latter has been over-emphasized at the expense of the former.

Overall, he saw great freedom in being able to interpret government policy and considered the school to be totally independent and free of pressures, apart from what the school perceived to be market forces, meeting parental and student wishes and addressing staff concerns. The Catholic Education Office (CEO) in Melbourne provided services and curriculum networks which were optional and while the school received funding from the CEO, there were very few strings attached. While there is a world-wide trend to tighten education budgets, the principal observed that since he had been at the school, there had been an increase in federal funding and the school has better financially placed than ever. In being connected with a religious order, the order was concerned that the school remained financially viable and that its ethos and standards were maintained. But with regards to innovation, the Principal considered there to be no pressure about what they were doing.

The prescriptive Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE), study for which occurs in the final two years of senior secondary schooling, and school policy required close alignment. Some of the VCE requirements reflect federal policy and a vocational education thrust. The Principal believed the school was able to 'read the signs' and make its own decisions, rather than be forced to change in response to the pressures of government policy. A curriculum review had been conducted recently following perceived difficulties with the current curriculum and teaching and learning outcomes. Thus the school has introduced new subjects but more in response to what parents and students demanded rather than as a reaction to a government policy. To date, they have not deliberately offered subjects related to the workforce.

The school offers the broadest range of subjects of any school in its region. Psychology has been introduced, but the Principal saw this as a 'flavour of the month' subject and expects it to have a short life. Japanese has also been introduced but the principal believes that at this stage, students

are learning it for its own sake rather than it being work related. Studying a language for its 'usefulness' would not be encouraged. The Principal regards media studies as a subject important from a philosophical point of view because of the opportunities it affords for students to develop critical awareness.

Part of the decision-making process of change is to equip staff to meet new demands. Because of the large numbers in the school, there is a large pool to draw on. However they are very under-resourced in the area of technology with regards to teacher expertise. He believes that his school, and education generally, must act quickly to address this situation. Most staff are not ready for what is happening in this area. Technological transformation of, and access to, knowledge is critical and the students see information technology as important to them. The Principal has started sowing the seeds for change and is working now on gaining staff acceptance for lap-top computers for Year 7 students in 1995. He is hoping the staff will actually ask for them by then. Already, he has started financial negotiations to meet the demands.

The Principal believed that while every school would want to say they were collaborative in bringing about change, he finds that in a school the size of his, it is a significant problem as to what degree there is a collaborative approach in evidence. To make change mandatory, would doom it to failure before it even started, in his view.

It was decided that change *was* necessary and that the change should be worked through collaboratively and, since it was seen as being important, time was made available to support it. This 'time' was used for workshops, discussions and inservicing, effected over a period of months so that when the document reflecting new policy was created, it was completed by the staff, for the staff, with full support from administration. (e.g.,) pastoral care and discipline policy). However, there were some changes necessary for the administrators to put in place. While there were opportunities for discussion at staff meetings, administrators took responsibility for these (e.g., timetable changes).

The change process began many months ago mostly through staffroom conversations. Sowing the seeds of change also involved staff (working always in pairs) visiting other schools and reporting their findings at full staff meetings. Months after this process, various models were presented and, once again, several months were given for more informal discussion between staff. As a group they are now open to more proposals, and new structures will commence in a flexible way that allows teaching staff to continue to have an input in their creation and management. Student retention has increased dramatically, and not all students are academically inclined.

Newly appointed Directors of Learning will be responsible for the appraisal of teaching and learning. The Principal believes that while the

majority will support this initiative, ten to twelve teachers will be threatened by it — 'but they need to be!' The process is intended to improve the whole staff and give support to the best teachers. It is anticipated that the middle-range teachers will lift their performance. If the Directors are successful, teaching should change, and student outcomes should change. Instruments used to assess student learning will be seen eventually as a normal part of their professional life and will not be considered disruptive to the students. The Principal wants all staff to be conscious of improving their teaching.

The school is legally required to have an affirmative action policy in place, and report annually to the affirmative action agency in Canberra. This mainly concerns staff. Year 9 students participate in an equal opportunity program and both sexes participate well across all subjects with the exception of physics, where the class is comprised mostly of boys. The financial situation of families did not impact on the students' choice of subjects or their decision to stay on at school. Catholic school financial support is extensive and is applied at various levels in ways that support families.

Traditionally, parents have given the school huge support morally and physically and it is clear to even the casual observer that the school is held in high esteem by them. For school events they turn up in huge numbers, but in terms of policy making and social interaction, there is very little input, e.g., there is no 'Parents and Friends' group and no 'Ex-Students Association'. The Principal hopes to address this, and wants to establish 'Friends of the College' with an educational, social and mission emphasis — not fundraising. He intends that, once formed, members will be involved in the decision making at the school.

Principal Change Facilitator Style

Interview data were compared with the behavioural indicators provided by Hall and Hord (1987, pp. 233–44) in matching each principal's change facilitator style to their typology, definitions of which are summarized in Figure 7.1, below. It should be noted that these scholars do not make claims for the completeness and comprehensiveness of the typology, rather they see it as a starting point, although there is a certain consistency of their findings with a number of other studies (Leithwood and Montgomery, 1982).

The Principal of School A maintained a confident belief in his vision for the school, and that the school community was capable of achieving the goals that realized that vision. He was clear about the goals he wished to achieve, allowed time for them to be realized, involved the staff in a slow process of change so that they could understand, own and support the change, and gave the staff great support in working with the change. He was aware of the change process and the factors that encouraged staff to embrace change, and was confident about his ability to initiate and

Figure 7.1: Change facilitator style (adapted from Hall and Hord 1987, pp. 230–31)

Initiators	**Responders**	**Managers**
Initiators have clear, decisive long-range policies and goals . . . they have very strong beliefs about what good schools and teaching should be like and work intensely to attain this vision . . . they have strong expectations for students, teachers and themselves; they convey and monitor these expectations through frequent contacts with teachers and clear explications of how the school is to operate and how teachers are to teach. When they feel it is in the best interests of the school, particularly in the student's interest they will seek changes in district programs or policies . . . Initiators tend to be adamant, but not unkind.	Responders place heavy emphasis on allowing teachers and others the opportunity to take the lead . . . They believe their primary role is to maintain a smoothly running school by focusing on traditional administrative tasks keeping teachers content and treating students well . . . they have a tendency toward making decisions on immediate circumstances rather than on longer range instructional or school goals . . . another characteristic is that, once a decision is made, it is set in concrete. A great deal of new information and extended discussion are required to bring about modifications.	Managers represent a broader range of behaviours. They demonstrate both responsive behaviours and they also initiate actions in support of the change effort . . . work without fanfare to provide basic support to teachers. They keep teachers informed about decisions and are sensitive to teacher needs. A particularly significant characteristic is that they protect teachers from what they perceive as excessive demands. Once they understand that outsiders . . . want something to happen in their school, they become very involved with teachers in making it happen yet they do not attempt to move beyond what is imposed. Managers try to do everything themselves.

support the decision making necessary to bring it about. He was patient — being prepared to commence the change process in a non-threatening way, years ahead of when he could realistically expect staff to embrace particular innovations in a whole hearted manner. He was also able to listen to and hear the demands of students, parents and staff, and to respond to their needs in an affirming way, while maintaining a very independent view of how to run his school. Considering that the changes were made independently of prevailing national policies, the Principal was in fact shaping the school along the lines that *Strengthening Australia's Schools* was seeking.

The Principal's clarity about his goals, respect for his staff, sensitivity to the process of change, and his enthusiasm for being part of the school community, provided a fine example of a successful change facilitator able to meet contemporary demands while not compromising a sound learning environment for the students. In the Hall and Hord typology of change facilitator styles (see Figure 7.1) this Principal is almost the archetype of an Initiator.

School B: Single-Sex, Inner Suburban

As it was the first year of the Principal's appointment to school B, she delegated the Deputy Principal as interviewee since he had held a senior leadership position at the school for six years.

Currently, staff morale is low, fatigue is a significant factor, as is the belief that the heavy workload of many teachers goes unrecognized. Change implies an increase in the workload, not a lessening or balancing with the current amount of work. The school requires more support in the dissemination of information and resources necessary to implement change. The reliance on attrition to enable new subjects to be introduced has meant a gradual acceptance by staff. Inservicing in priority areas such as English as a Second Language (ESL) and technology require support in human and financial terms the demands of which will be ongoing. The school has experienced significant structural change within the last six years with the amalgamation of three campuses into one, but this was for the sake of a more efficient school, rather than a response to policy implementation.

The policy document *Strengthening Australia's Schools* was viewed as an economic rationalist argument for more efficiency and competency in education and for a national curriculum. This school did not see the rationalist argument as being complimentary to its ethos, or the implications of the proposed national curriculum which are regarded as enormous. The national curriculum requires 'profiles' that are in addition to assessment. Profiles involve levels of attainment in tangible, objective descriptive statements and it requires inservicing, generated either externally or internally. The Deputy Principal believed it would bring commonality between schools and states. He expressed concern about becoming accountable to externalities as he believes the school should be accountable to parents and students.

Recent divisions at the ministerial level have given schools who are not particularly interested in profiles the excuse to resist and this has reinforced people's negative response. Enthusiasm is a factor in making change a success. Past negative experiences of a lack of support when mandatory government policy was implemented have made administration and staff cautious about more change. Staff saw a lack of support, constant change, work 'overload', and using their 'own time', as factors in resisting change. If there seems to be no support for change, and requirements are imposed on top of their current workload, staff become angry and resistant.

The Deputy Principal believes that people generally are cautious about change. Staff attended staff meetings where information was disseminated. There was no external support in setting up information dissemination and the school was left to its own resources and initiatives. Staff are prepared to put in extra time for their personal career path, e.g., post-graduate studies, but once the teachers achieve their personal goals, they often have

a resistant attitude to being involved in information dissemination. The staff tend to respond to direct communication regarding what is expected, but unless demands are specific and clear, they tend not to respond. This school found it difficult to integrate the long-term strategies that a policy document offers, when the time-demands for meeting more immediate needs comprise their main agenda.

The school retention level has always been high, reflecting its history as an academic school, its supportive environment, and the strong tradition of care for the education of girls initiated by the Sisters of earlier days. The school also has a strong tradition of success in the areas of creative arts, home economics and textiles. Administrators see the need to rationalize some subjects and follow the national framework. Keyboarding, as part of information technology, has been introduced for a semester in Year 7, and Year 8 subjects (English, mathematics and Italian) have been timetabled in the computer rooms where the technology can be applied. Parents and students favoured Japanese as the Asian language to be taught so Japanese has been introduced as an alternative to Italian. The process of introducing semester long courses in Year 7 has enabled the introduction of new subjects without the staff being unduly threatened. In the Deputy Principal's view there has been little change behind the classroom door, with results from external exams being seen as a significant indicator of teaching success.

ESL has enjoyed special attention as 75 per cent of the students are from a non-English speaking background and in this area the response of staff has been most significant. In addition to the expertise of the ESL specialist, a quarter of the staff participated in an intensive eight week course so that an ESL approach might be given support across the curriculum. It is anticipated that more staff will be involved in this course next year.

An affirmative action policy is in place in order to encourage and support the girls in helping them break stereotypical models of subject selection, especially in mathematics and science. It is noteworthy in effecting this, that gender inclusive language is only just coming to the fore, and there is a plan to appoint an Advanced Skills Teacher (AST) to deal with affirmative action issues.

The school has no formal teacher appraisal system but recognizes that this is an area that needs to be formalized, not because of external factors but because it makes good sense. Staff would need to get used to the idea that this was a quite normal and professional process. The Deputy Principal believes staff policy handbooks would help to bring this about, and recognizes that the value of such a policy would be in its creation by the staff, rather than in the document itself. It would be critical that the compilation of such a document was done in a collaborative way.

In the socially disadvantaged area from which the school draws its students, the parents have consistently shown faith in the teachers and are

very supportive of what they do, but without being part of the decision-making process.

The school responded to outside pressures when those pressures could not be avoided. Time had not been garnered to allow for initiatives for change to come from within the school, so responses to both external policy and the negative responses of staff tended to be reactionary. The school was indeed a very busy environment, and staff have had to deal with much change in the recent past in a way that has not encouraged them to embrace further change. The broader vision of how things could be, and the knowledge about how change could occur in a resistant culture were truncated in order to respond to the immediate demands of the day, the experience of the short-term effectiveness of mandatory policy change, and a sensitivity to short-term staff demands. Overall, there seemed to be an under-estimation of how things could be, on every level. Unless some visionary connection can be made between government policy and what the school could do to respond to the climate of today, the implementation of the policy embedded in *Strengthening Australia's Schools* can only be seen as yet another burden for the staff to carry.

Principal Change Facilitator Style

In referencing these data to a particular change facilitator style, a caveat is needed here. It should be remembered that the Deputy Principal of School B undertook this interview in view of the recency of the Principal to this appointment. Any profile therefore necessarily represents a mixture of the self-perceptions of the Deputy Principal as a change facilitator, and the events of the recent past under the auspices of the preceding Principal.

While the staff have indicated that they appreciate information regarding new policies, the Deputy Principal believes that change is only successful when it is imposed. If change is accompanied with the choice to change, change will not occur. What he believes is required for change is time; an interest in the proposed change, and staff who are open to and looking for change. If staff are comfortable and know they can operate well at the present level, they won't embrace change if change is only presented as an option.

The Deputy Principal believes that change ideally should be collaborative, but has observed that when an initiative for change comes from outside the school environment, the local staff tend not to identify with it or 'own' it. Therefore, if the idea is from an external source, it may as well be coercive. Further, the degree of implementation success depends on the personalities of the administrators. If they are perceived to have authority and respect for their work, they reflect leadership. If they are disorganized, they do not gain respect. The challenge for administration is not to institutionalize the process of change by making it a role for one person to fulfil.

In spite of a number of resistive elements to innovation the school has

nevertheless acceded to some degree to student needs and parent wishes. The change facilitator style embodied in recent school leadership, with variations on this theme, is best circumscribed by the Responder (Figure 7.1, p. 122).

National Concerns and Policy Initiatives: New Zealand

The Picot Report (formally known as *Administering for Excellence*) heralded the shift to school-based management in New Zealand. The Picot Committee was an advisory taskforce of the Cabinet Social Equity Committee (CSEC). Announced on the 21st July 1987, its report was released in April 1988 and foreshadowed major changes to the education system with these taking effect from April 1989. Major changes included a New Zealand curriculum framework, revised education guidelines, new legal authority to the Education Review Office (ERO), new accreditation procedures administered by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) and a revised Public Finance Act which placed further demands on schools and administrators. The great year of change throughout the system was 1989. The intended outcome of a cluster of policy initiatives was to create a new system of checks and balances to embed responsiveness as the norm of professional and administrative practice. According to Rae (1994), 'The initial stance of 1988–89 promoting local management within national guidelines continues in place, but is undergoing continuing adjustment' (p. 4).

Accountability included the responsibility of each school to improve provision for disadvantaged pupils and groups. This area received more emphasis than Dawkins' equity proposals. The New Zealand experience stems from the country's raised consciousness regarding the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, created in 1840 between the English and the Maori people, which promised continuing resource access and the protection of cultural rights and identity. Its significance to New Zealand culture is examined in some detail by Roger Peddie in the following chapter. There is now a national thrust to honor both the spirit and substance of this Treaty as history has not lived up to its promises. Social, cultural and economic equity for the Maoris, and other disadvantaged groups, therefore, is high on the public-policy agenda.

Through the reforms it was intended that there would be considerable innovation in curriculum and teaching methods, and that more people in the community would take an interest in education. While in 1987 there had been a major review of the curriculum, New Zealand has in fact had a national curriculum, with local latitude in its interpretation, since the end of the nineteenth century. Another concern was that parents were dissatisfied with their level of involvement. This is an interesting development,

given that parents have a far more sophisticated network of involvement in New Zealand schools than is to be found in many in Australia.

The Picot Report proposed that individual learning institutions would be the basic unit of education administration; that the administration of schools would be a partnership between the teaching staff and the community; that each school would create specific local objectives within the national objectives and would be accountable for those objectives. Equity, and resource support were also proposed.

At the time, fears were expressed that a dissolution of a national system of education would result in a patchwork which was likely to increase social and educational disparities. It was thought that competition between schools would increase without there being any accompanying educational advantages; schools would become more parochial; narrow interest groups would assume control of schools; and that state funding cutbacks would result in parents having to carry a greater cost burden for education. Finally, because of the need for comparable accountability measures, with regard to assessment and financial reporting, real innovation was likely to be minimal.

School-based Implementation of National Policies: New Zealand

School X: Single Sex Girl's School, Suburban

School X became a state-integrated school[2] in 1983 and the over-arching concern of the school was to maintain its academic ethos and special character. Students enrolled here are essentially homogenous culturally and economically. The school enrols and supports a small number of disadvantaged students.

The Principal understood the Picot Report to give more responsibility to schools which were then placed in a better position to meet the needs of their local communities but, for her, the implementation of the Report's findings also provided an 'official' opportunity to assess the needs of her school. Consequently, there had been some curriculum changes, and there was a local flavour in the curriculum within the over-riding framework of the national curriculum. Generally, the girls' choice of subjects reflect a career thrust in this academically oriented school.

The school is going to include an additional subject to the two final years to broaden subject choice. It seems, however, that the necessity for this came from student and parent demand rather than as a response to government policy. If the school is not able to meet student demand, parents take their daughters to a school which can accommodate them. Also, economics determine what is possible. If there are not sufficient numbers in a class to make it cost effective, the subject doesn't run. This has

implications especially for European languages which have been affected by the introduction of an Asian language. The influence of the Treaty of Waitangi has been felt in subjects such as Maori and New Zealand history, integrated English and social studies and the appearance of bilingual signs around the school. There is no Maori language being taught at present as the demand is not great enough to support classes in this area.

Staff are overworked and fatigued. They have come to expect constant change but would prefer less pressure. With the introduction, next year, of an additional subject in Years 11 and 12, and the restructuring of the daily timetable to include an additional teaching period, the teachers will have heavier teaching loads and larger classes will also come into being. It was becoming evident to the Principal that people were arriving at a point where they were not prepared to do all the extra work when there was no change in the rewards.

In response to these pressures the school is seeking out new structures which will involve the re-allocation of tasks and new job descriptions will be required. The Principal anticipates that 'job share' and 'part-time' work will increase significantly and that many of the staff — most of whom are female — will choose to work part-time. Human resources are the critical area and the professional development of staff has, and will, continue to be a priority.

In recent years, the school has experienced a greater retention rate of students into Years 11 and 12, and academically less able students were staying on at school. As in Australia, this was seen as being more of a response to factors affecting the country at large, e.g., unemployment, rather than policy implementation. A special effort is being made to keep numbers small in those classes where students are struggling with academic work. The staff tend to co-operate and work well together to meet the needs of the students, and the belief was that learning had increased. The school relied on improved results in external examinations to indicate that real change had occurred.

Those parents who served on the school's Board of Trustees were involved in policy decisions. Otherwise, the parent body was supportive, influential, but not involved directly in policy decisions. The Principal saw herself as the chief executive officer, employed by, and answerable to her Board.

Principal Change Facilitator Style

The Principal of School X responded to the high fatigue level of her staff and was cautious in adding to their workload. There was a clear recognition that sharing the administrative work load was critical, given the likelihood of its further increase due to external factors.

Policy that was regarded as mandatory was seen as having to be done. New Zealand government policy was believed to be coercive and necessarily had to be implemented with little flexibility or room to manoeuvre, and

this had to be balanced against parents and students' demands while maintaining the character and academic standing of the school. Preparing students for public examination and university entry was regarded as the major priority, since the results of this endeavor were used by the school community in assessing the performance of the school and its Principal.

While elements of the Manager change facilitator style were in evidence (see Figure 7.1), the majority of the indicators point towards a Responder style, probably influenced by perception of having to balance competing external and internal demands, and to maintain the traditions of the school which were oriented more towards stability than change.

There was a degree of reactiveness and inevitability in this attitude as distinct from the conviction that change could energize and transform learning. Implementation relied on the good nature and cooperation of the staff, which was currently being stretched to its limits. While staff response was a cooperative one, the Principal saw little flexibility in curriculum choice, as she saw that external assessment dictated what is taught.

School Y: Single Sex Boys School, Suburban

School Y takes both day students and boarders who come from a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds, with a significant proportion regarded as being disadvantaged.

The Principal's understanding of the Picot Report was that the key thrust was to decentralize the bureaucracy and attendant decision making, and to give more local control and ownership to schools via their Boards of Trustees. He believed that secondary and intermediate schools increased in autonomy and that the changes for them were not as great as for primary schools. Whereas each secondary school was run by a Board of Governors with staffing and budget responsibilities the governance of primary schools was conducted from a central Board. With the change to local control, this made a significant difference to primary education. (For more insights regarding these changes in the organization of schooling as a consequence of government policy see Chapter 4 in this volume by Cathy Wylie on the school view.)

One of the initial tasks the school had was to create a charter. A framework was given to ensure equity and to incorporate the Treaty of Waitangi. There was also room for individual schools to formalize what they wished to emphasize. Every school spent considerable time drawing up their own charter of which 80 per cent was standardized centrally from Wellington and about 20 per cent was local input. Schools had no choice but to prepare various policies including a staff development policy, delivery of equipment policy and so on. Fourteen specific policy tasks had to be produced by November 1990. There were opportunities within these policies for the incorporation of local goals and objectives.

There had been much talk about the desirability of impending changes which became 'intended' changes. The Board and members of staff did make a lift in their thinking of what was going on in the school in which there seemed to be greater responsibility accepted by staff to address issues of equity, alongside curriculum development. The Principal was of the opinion that the implementing of these policy initiatives brought about a greater professionalism in schools.

One of his major concerns has been the pace of change. People have had to come to terms with a lot of new formats and procedures. Teachers have responded with open-minded questioning of the need and purposes of the proposed changes and once legitimate reasons for change were identified, teachers were willing to accept, or at least go along, with them. While the objectives of the Picot Report were laudable, achieving them presented a huge workload within the given timeframe.

Whilst there have been a number of organizational changes required, and the new curriculum framework makes a number of demands, staff have been relieved that 80 per cent of their traditional curriculum is unchanged. Only one new subject has been introduced and this was in response to market demands, not because of government policy. The staff are aware of the conflict between the demand for skills and education for life, but continue to work on offering a traditional range of subjects in order to ensure as broad career choice as possible for each student. While the Principal perceives 'healthy competition' between the areas of maths/science and the humanities, neither area has been disadvantaged with regard to student choice. The local disadvantaged youth are encouraged to lift their efforts and some are able to enter tertiary studies. The Principal noted that the background and aspirations of parents for their children was a significant factor in how well the students performed at school.

Because staff are being asked to formalize policies in a collaborative way, the Principal believes that this will eventually become a benchmark for change in the classroom. He has allowed a two-year time span for the results of this strategy to be realized.

Parents are supportive of school initiatives but are not involved with policy formation. There was no expectation that they would or should be. Curriculum issues were left to the school; the Board was responsible for the budget and, as parents were on the Board, there was an opportunity to receive their input through this forum. This aspect of organizational culture has more to do with the nature and tradition of the school, however, than with the policy directions emanating from the Picot Report.

Principal Change Facilitator Style

The Principal of School Y interpreted government policy in broad terms, and his style of leadership involved a discernment process that decided, with staff, what was to be adopted and adapted by the school community.

He was also aware that constructive change takes time. He was sensitive to the fact that his teachers were stressed by the pace and amount of change required over a short timescale and they were working a lot harder now, although some needed to be challenged. While many are prepared to give a lot of extra time for tutoring, they feel that more and more is being pushed onto them.

This Principal sees that it is critical to discern what is achievable, rather than feel a need to respond to everything that is asked of schools. He supports collaboration with staff to a large degree, but goals, which are clear and which the staff have been involved in creating, are finalized by him and he carries the final decision. The Principal has found that clear leadership has been significant in coping with change and that strong and supportive leadership allied with collaborative staff strategies has assisted staff ownership of the changes made so far.

This profile is largely congruent with a Manager change facilitator style (see Figure 7.1 on p. 122) in which the external demands of the policy environment, while creating higher staff workloads, are viewed positively and kept to manageable proportions because of a discerning principal.

Policy Implementation Compared

While both the Australian and New Zealand Government policies embraced educational and school reform, there were significant differences between them. According to Rae:

> From Australia, Cuttance (1992, page 20) distinguishes the changes in New Zealand as devolution in a 'political' as opposed to an 'organisational' form; Beare and Boyd (1993, page 8) distinguish the reforms in New Zealand as focusing on school-level change as opposed to change at the level of district, province or state. (1994, p. 3)

Australia proposed the development of a national common curriculum framework, whereas, a national curriculum had been in place in New Zealand since the end of the nineteenth century. New Zealand's thrust was aimed at changing the form and manner of educational administration in schools. In the process a redefinition of the culture of centralism and dependence to allow local schools more independence occurred. Local schools were to have responsibility for budget allocation, staff employment, and educational outcomes, thus moving away from a centralized system found to be 'particularly vulnerable to pressure group politics to the point where that had become a major mode of decision making instead of co-operative problem solving between local clients and professionals.' (Macpherson R., 1989, p. 33).

With respect to curriculum, schools were to create their own curricular responses within the framework of the national curriculum, giving schools room to provide local flavour, but not necessarily the staple diet. Both countries recognize and support the idea of assessment being related and complimentary to the curriculum.

Strengthening Australia's Schools was aimed particularly at secondary schools, whereas the focus of *Tomorrow's Schools* was on primary and secondary schools (including intermediate schools). Whilst the Dawkins' policy initiatives regarded the teaching profession as central to the quality of schooling, the declared intention to use education in the service of the economy has threatened a systematic down grading of the humanities, and social sciences. Kenway and Blackmore (1988, p. 51) speculate that significant gender-relevant inequalities are also likely to emerge. *Tomorrow's Schools* places a higher priority on equity concerning educational outcomes for members of different social groups. Given New Zealand's more overt cultural sensitivity especially towards its indigenous people, educational equity is clearly a high priority item on the public policy agenda — at least on paper (but see Chapter 8 by Rogers Peddie in this volume for a more detailed analysis of this).

In constructing frameworks for local management, New Zealand gave greater emphasis to management by Board of Trustees and to parent involvement. Each Board of Trustees was to reflect the partnership between the professionals and the community served. It was made up of a permanent majority of elected parents, the principal, a staff representative, and in post-primary institutions, a student representative. Policy making however, requires different skills to that of policy implementation, and there needs to be a practical working relationship between daily school management, local policy making, and accountability for educational outcomes.

Both national policy statements put many administrative demands on an already heavy workload for administrators and teachers. In this regard alone, and illustrated by the cases described above, it would seem that the principal's role in implementation is critical in managing change and innovation, serving to confirm once again what is frequently reported in the change literature. (This aspect is described graphically with respect to the role of primary school principals by Neville Bennet and Clive Carré in Chapter 10 of this volume.)

Regardless of the policy to be implemented, those schools which are proactive in a changing environment tend to be those where the principal has an awareness of the nature of the change process itself and anticipates its likely effects on the school community, and especially his or her teachers. In the cases cited above this was invariably accompanied by the recognition that time was required in which implementation was a gradual process that usually required years of nurturing effort for its potential to be fully realized.

Where the principal showed some independence from external influences,

in discerning whether or not proposed changes were appropriate for the school, implementation was managed more effectively than in situations where teachers felt overwhelmed. Significantly, this was also associated with principals who had clear long-term goals for their schools, were patient in realizing them and had confidence in the ability of staff to achieve them in a collaborative and cooperative way. Where leadership is less confident, less discerning, less aware of the processes of implementation, less mindful of having clear, long-term goals, and is caught in making immediate and short-term responses to policy demands, the chances of directing change in a controlled way that supports transformative processes and keeps workloads down to human proportions is reduced.

Conclusion

From the four case studies presented it is concluded that there is differential support in Catholic schools for state-initiated and state-mandated requirements. The extent to which these policies directly affect the work of schools appears to be a function of change facilitator style exhibited by those in leadership positions. This, however, should be treated as a working hypothesis rather than a concrete finding. Given the restricted range of data employed in this feasibility study further validation of principals' change facilitator style is needed and followed vertically using ethnographic techniques that track policy implementation decisions from their initiation to their effects in classrooms and the wider school community.

With respect to the interview data, confidence in a leader who scanned the external environment in which the school was embedded; who exhibited the characteristics of Initiator/Manager; and who recognized and anticipated the dynamics of the change process at work, assisted the creativity of the school in both implementing innovation from a variety of sources and resisting external demands when these were seen to be inappropriate to the needs and local contexts of the school.

Factors that appeared to militate against the implementation of government policy included: the perception of a history of a lack of support from government sources; lack of appreciation for the work that teachers do; lack of rewards for ever increasing workloads and responsibility; perceived powerlessness and exclusion of teachers in the area of education policy at state or national level; leadership styles where discernment of what was able to be adopted by the school was not clear; the pace of change; teacher fatigue and low morale.

Through the eyes of the principals interviewed, it appears that market forces, parent demands, and tradition were more influential than government policy in affecting the *modus operandi* of their schools. Somewhat surprisingly, given that each was an autonomous or semi-autonomous religious-based school, that might have been expected to be somewhat

cynical of, and aloof from, the instrumental values captured in government policy documents, each in their own way has responded to the policy intent, yet with quite different effects on their organization, programmes and practice.

Notes

1 In this Chapter the use of Year levels in Australia and New Zealand is synonymous with Grade levels in the USA.
2 All Catholic schools in New Zealand are state-integrated schools which means that, while they are able to keep their special character, they come under the broad umbrella of the state. It is noteworthy that the Bishops of New Zealand, insisted that state-integrated Catholic schools have a 96 per cent Catholic enrolment.

Section III

Curriculum Contexts

In the concluding section of this book, we look at cases of competing ideological positions concerning the implementation of curriculum change. If schooling lies at the heart of education, the curriculum can be seen to lie at the heart of schooling. Many of the large-scale reforms that have occurred in westernized societies during the last decade have involved radical changes to the curriculum, usually to achieve revamped goals of education at the national or state level.

As in other countries (see the companion volume for international perspectives on policy), New Zealand government policy has been to take a more proactive role in education, attempting to link control of education to national and government interests, particularly in the sphere of economic advantage. At the macro-level, Roger Peddie analyses the effect of ideological shifts in policy on the position of language education in the context of the curriculum structure in Chapter 8. Peddie demonstrates a significant shift in regard to the relationship between language and culture between the 1988 *National Curriculum Statement* and the *National Curriculum of New Zealand* (1991).

Earlier curriculum documents took the position that language and culture were strongly interrelated, a view of particular significance in relation to the Maori, who form the second largest ethnic group in the country, and for whom restoration of Maori language and culture is of political and cultural concern. In contrast, the new policies promote an instrumental view of language. From this perspective, enhancing economic opportunities for New Zealand would entail a shift from a tradition of teaching European languages (including Latin) as a study of 'cultural, literary and historical importance', to a study of languages significant to trading partners (e.g., Korean, Arabic, Italian and Thai; Mandarin, Russian, Spanish and Indonesian).

Policy shifts of the kind described by Peddie, may also conflict with pedagogy. The assumption at policy level appears to be that language for trade purposes can be acquired through an instrumental style of instruction in a very limited number of years of schooling. Such a view, Peddie suggests, ignores what is known about language learning, and the time and practices that would be required to achieve a level of proficiency appropriate to the international negotiations to which government policy appears to aspire.

At a pragmatic level of implementation, logistical conflicts may arise. In the particular case examined by Peddie, if English is to be compulsory then Maori and all other languages will have to compete for space in students' timetables, and in schools' timetables with each other. Further, subjects areas designated as significant to the national interest (e.g., technology and languages) will compete with each other for space in the curriculum structure. A different kind of pragmatic stumbling block is that of provision of teachers competent in the newly favoured languages. The

time lag in education of teachers will be problematic, so offering those languages on a significant scale will be logistically impractical.

Thus, Peddie's paper identifies potential conflicts in the cultural domain when ideological shifts in government policy applied to education fail to take account of existing cultural practices and expectations. To compound the error, in the particular field of language learning, government policy has not take into consideration relationships between culture and language in the pedagogy of language learning. This is likely to inhibit attainment of government aspirations in the field.

Marnie O'Neill's paper in Chapter 9 takes up the issue of ideology and curriculum change from a different perspective. Examining the case of English (mother tongue) education in secondary schools in a traditionally, strongly centralized system, she relates structural curriculum revision to ideological orientations to teaching English.

Three major curriculum revisions, between 1969 and 1994, have been located in different orientations to teaching English that have provided teachers with different opportunities for curriculum negotiation, but each has carried a tacit demand to change their orientations to English, and their pedagogical practices. In all of the revisions, consultation with teachers in the curriculum development phases was minimal, and subsequent teacher development programs focused on administrative or accountability requirements of the innovations, rather than their ideological positioning.

As examples of curriculum innovation and change, the first two revisions have been regarded as failures. O'Neill attributes these failures to an assortment of interacting factors: refusal to acknowledge competing ideological orientations to the subject area; marginalization of teachers in the developmental phase; and the implementation of change on an impossibly short time-line with inadequate provisions for professional development to support the change. She notes there appears to be an assumption that curriculum packages can be taken on board as an implicit part of the curriculum design, and be implemented by schools and teachers without translation and that teachers can accommodate this in addition to coping with the increase in workload normally associated with curriculum change.

In O'Neill's exemplar, the system is currently poised to implement the third change (for teachers who started their careers in 1984 this will be the third radical curriculum innovation in ten years). Early indicators were that little had been learned from the preceding failures. This time the innovation might compound externally developed and imposed requirements for accountability of student outcomes with the expectation that teachers in schools will take on the role of curriculum designers and developers without appropriate professional development. Because of the concurrent devolution process (detailed by Max Angus in Chapter 1), professional development programs were not provided from the centre to support the implementation process and individual schools had to recognize

this was a priority item in effecting real change. The onus therefore was on the school to assume responsibility for the necessary inservice work.

In Chapter 10, Neville Bennett and Clive Carre examine the impact of the national curriculum in the UK and recount the early experiences of primary teachers, trained as generalists, now required to teach to specific attainment targets in a highly specific and publicly verifiable way. Primary teachers were expected to accommodate to multiple changes, thus the curriculum in science was to be implemented simultaneously with national curricula in English and mathematics under new assessment procedures and requirements. The initial development phase was marked by a lack of consultation, although this has been somewhat ameliorated lately. Many teachers and principals did not agree with the ideology of the imposed changes.

These researchers use survey data to illustrate the change process at work, referencing this in turn to 'concerns theory' and present an analysis of the difficulties teachers experienced in implementing curricula when their own self-perceived subject matter knowledge was inadequate to the task. The seemingly intractable problem of teachers' pedagogical subject matter knowledge is subsequently addressed with implications for teaching and learning in a changing environment.

The data analysis attends to conflicts in teachers' perceptions of themselves as generalists, when the demands of the science curriculum required them to behave as subject specialists, and temporary de-skilling as an aspect of change. The seemingly intractable problem of ensuring adequate subject matter knowledge remains.

The cases presented here, while highly localized in their detail, can be read in the general context of change theory, and in the current climate of belief that centrally mandated change, 'in the national economic interest', will improve the quality of education, increase student attainment, and simultaneously solve everything from unemployment to the national debt. Some or all of those outcomes may be possible; these papers offer some instances of the ways in which conflicting agendas and positions may impact on the desired change, and some ways in which change will be inhibited if competing positions are not taken into account.

Chapter 8

Culture and Economic Change: The New Zealand School Curriculum

Roger Peddie[1]

It is commonplace for school curricula to be prescribed nationally and interpreted locally (Holmes and McLean, 1989). This has been the case for many years in countries as diverse as France, Japan, Latin America, the former Soviet Union and New Zealand. In other countries, such as the United States, Australia and India, state governments have the major role, with varying degrees of curriculum control and/or freedom. Curriculum is increasingly affected, however, by the tendency for central governments to move towards what are commonly labelled 'New Right' or free-market approaches in education. Such moves are often justified in terms both of greater efficiency (Welch, 1990) and, especially, of greater freedom of choice so that individuals can better control their own destiny. This has been a common argument in statements by both Labor and national governments in New Zealand. It was a key point in the Picot Report (more formally known *as Administering for Excellence*, 1988) which sparked off a series of major changes in New Zealand education, and has clearly been important in developments in the Britain and the United States (Bondi, 1991).

In essence, the 'reforms' that have been taking place in several countries, including England, Wales, Australia and New Zealand, have been characterized by the following moves. First, schools are given greater autonomy over and responsibility for selected aspects of their work. This may include budget decisions, curriculum and/or staffing. Second, there are major changes in central agencies, some of which continue over a period of years (e.g., the State of Victoria, Australia), resulting in considerable lessening of the *professional* influence in the central bureaucracies. Third, political control of key elements of the system increases sharply, with decisions regularly made under the strong influence of treasury. One large volume of the two-volume 1987 government briefing papers was devoted entirely to education (New Zealand Treasury, 1987). Many of the recommendations have since reappeared in government reviews and subsequent legislation. Fourth, changes are rapid and continuous, with the rhetoric of a

fast-changing technology, economy and society being used to justify this. These changes are often interpreted as producing a state of crisis in society in general and education in particular (Peddie, 1992).

To be fair, the moves just described are sometimes accompanied by serious-minded attempts by government to offer targeted assistance to identifiable groups at risk. The contradictions between the politics of free choice and policies of social assistance, however, have not been satisfactorily resolved. In New Zealand, talk of assistance is now linked with means testing, shifting the focus from broader issues of equity. Many New Zealanders would claim that over the last five years in particular, successive government attitudes towards Maori, women and ethnic minorities have in fact hardened, increasingly driven by what are seen as economic imperatives.

The case of New Zealand may have significance, because the Minister has been quite explicit about the need for government to be more directive. In a major speech to a union-organized curriculum conference in May, 1991, the Minister referred approvingly to moves in the United States, England and Wales and 'the same activist role of central government' in Australia (Smith, 1991b).[2] The Minister further spelled out the significance of Government's role, making it clear who would in future control the curriculum:

> In today's world, issues of curriculum are no longer just the concern of educators, but a matter of national and governmental interest. In the past, the curriculum has been essentially shaped by teachers, education administrators, and academic and curriculum specialists. Now, and for the first time in countries such as the USA, UK and Australia, we find governments being increasingly prepared to legislate for the curriculum. . . . The change is a result of government's heightened recognition of education as a significant aspect of national development, its central position in the development of a sound economic strategy. (Smith, 1991b, pp. 2–3)

These comments were made just as a new draft national curriculum was about to be released. They not only signal stronger government control, but show the specific links perceived by government between the curriculum and the economy. In the context of historical debates over curriculum, three major approaches are often identified: knowledge-based, student-centred and society-centred (Lawton, 1983). Society-centred approaches can of course vary tremendously from utopian views of social reconstruction through education (e.g., Plato, Mannheim, Brameld), to attempts by totalitarians to mould society to their own narrow ends (e.g., pre-war Nazi Germany). The most popular recent version is evident in what the New Zealand Minister of Education is saying here. The 'right' curriculum (taught and assessed the 'right' way) will bring economic prosperity, which in turn will (presumably) lead to a better and happier society.

A counter view would suggest that if the common curriculum does not address equity and other important social and cultural issues directly, much more could be lost than economic success.

This chapter goes on to outline recent developments in curriculum in New Zealand. It then examines the May 1991 draft of *The National Curriculum of New Zealand*, (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1991), and ministerial statements relating to it. Discussion centres on secondary school curriculum and around the role of language relative to other (especially economically valued) subjects. It was felt to be important to look at secondary schools. In New Zealand, as elsewhere, they have been the main target of government attacks relating to curriculum and achievement.

Language is chosen as a focal issue for two reasons. First, language is a core value (Smolicz, 1981) for Maori, New Zealand's indigenous people and by far the second largest ethnic group in that country. Second, language can either be viewed as a key element of culture, or more simply as a means of communicating between peoples. This chapter suggests that perceptions of the role of language in the curriculum have recently shifted from the former to a restricted version of the latter. This shift reveals a lack of understanding of the nature of advanced language skills, and of language learning in schools.

Secondary Curriculum in New Zealand

The majority of secondary schools in New Zealand offer five-year programs, beginning at about age thirteen (form 3). Education is now compulsory to age sixteen. Students commonly take a programe of core subjects and selected options for the first two years and tend to specialize more from the third year (Peddie, 1991d). In that year, they sit the first national examination, the School Certificate, in five or less-commonly six subjects. In the fourth year (form 4), students take a variety of locally assessed but nationally moderated subjects for the Sixth Form Certificate. In the final seventh form year, most sit the University Bursaries/Scholarship examination, which acts also as the qualifying examination for university entrance. As noted later, the final version of the new curriculum framework has been released, and there are changes mooted in the examinations at sixth-form level. These changes will probably occur in 1995–96.

In broad outline, and up to the time of writing, about 50 per cent of the curriculum in the first two years is prescribed under regulations that, somewhat incredibly, were introduced in 1944. This compulsory core comprises English, mathematics, general science, social studies, art or a craft, music and physical education (Department of Education, 1959). Health was added in the mid 1980s. Topics in health are compulsory, but these may be included in the syllabus of science or other related subjects.

In the fifth form, about thirty-five subjects are offered for School

Certificate, including English, Maori and seven foreign languages. A wide range of subjects is offered in the sixth form, where schools have freedom to develop local courses for (annual) Ministry approval. In the final year, some of this choice remains, as school increasingly allows students in the senior school to study at more than one level. Over twenty-five subjects are offered for the Bursaries/Scholarships examination. English, Maori and the same seven foreign languages constitute over a third of these subjects.

In 1982, the New Zealand Department of Education prepared a report on New Zealand education for an Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) examining team (Department of Education, 1982). Its summary of the development of both curriculum and of the syllabus for individual subjects represents the standard procedure for over forty years to 1989, so it is worth quoting in full.

> School curricula are determined nationally and interpreted locally in each school. All syllabuses of instruction are approved by the Minister of Education and supervised by the Department of Education's inspectors of schools. Changes in official syllabuses are, however, the last stage of processes of consultation, development, in-service training and evaluation which usually take several years and which are designed to involve teachers in all parts of the country and, increasingly, interested members of the public. (pp. 18–19)

Syllabus revision has occurred regularly in almost all subjects over these past forty to fifty years. As noted above, the process has often been slow, but the involvement of teachers has normally been such that by the time a new syllabus is officially promulgated most teachers would be thoroughly familiar with it, and many would have been using a draft version for one or two years. It is hoped by teachers that a similar process will continue, although changes to the central agencies also mean changes in syllabus development. As there are no longer subject inspectors, nor any central curriculum division, syllabus development will be by contract, and supervision will be maintained by the Policy Division of the Ministry.

Reviews of the curriculum as a whole have been much less frequent and no major changes have occurred since the 1940s. Many subjects have been added, however, and the older approach of students opting into or being selected for a set 'package' of subjects according to perceptions of their ability has almost disappeared (Peddie, 1991d).

Internal reviews of secondary education, along with various issues related to curriculum (such as social education and women in education), did take place during the 1960s and 1970s. The reports which emerged did little to change the overall curriculum. At the end of 1982, however, a committee was set up to review the core curriculum for schools. It reported to the national Government Minister of Education in March, 1984. The committee recommended an increase in the time allocated to the

compulsory core from approximately 50 to 70 per cent of the time available in the first two years of secondary school. Current subject offerings were largely retained, with major time allocations going to English, social studies, mathematics and science. Compulsory, but in decreasing order of time allocation were physical education, music and art, and home economics or workshop craft. Schools would be required to involve students in several other studies and activities, but with no set time allocation. Named here were Taha Maori (a Maori dimension in the curriculum), computer awareness, career education, and health (New Zealand Department of Education, 1984).

The 1984 report was seen by many as a conservative if not backward step. With the advent of a Labor government in 1984, the curriculum review was reopened, and a new committee set in place. Large-scale public involvement was sought over the next eighteen months, resulting in over 21,000 submissions. After considering these, the committee issued a draft report in July 1986 (Department of Education, 1986). Several thousand submissions on the draft were considered prior to the final report, written in late 1986 and released in early 1987 (Department of Education, 1987).

This final report proposed fifteen principles basic to the curriculum of every school and ninety-nine recommendations as to how these principles could be put into practice. In brief, they proposed a common national curriculum, comprising the fifteen principles and a commonly agreed set of 'inter-related aspects of learning knowledge, skills, attitudes and values' (Department of Education, 1987, p. 39). The proposed changes were, then, radically different from the 1984 report. The committee wished to break down traditional subject divisions; to incorporate a strong equity agenda with regard to Maori, women and other groups; and to give individual schools and their communities much more say over the curriculum, which would actually be used in the school.

This document was followed in early 1988 by a discussion document written by the Department of Education as a follow-up to the review (New Zealand Department of Education, 1988). While retaining most of the content from the fifteen principles of 1987, this document reduced the number to five. These principles were:

- focusing on the learner;
- promoting a sense of cultural identity;
- promoting equity;
- achieving balance and coherence; and
- providing for accountability.

The document proposed a new curriculum comprising eight 'aspects of learning':

- culture and heritage;
- language;

- creative and aesthetic development;
- mathematics;
- practical abilities;
- living in society;
- science, technology and the environment; and
- health and well-being.

These aspects were spelled out in the document and a number of proposals for 'learning outcomes', organized around 'key ideas' were set out for each of five levels of the schools system (three primary and two secondary 'levels') (*op cit*, pp. 9–39).

Some trials using this new curriculum were conducted during 1989, but the same year saw the major reshuffle of the old Department of Education as part of the reforms following the Picot Report (*Administering for Excellence*), and the Government's response, *Tomorrow's Schools* (Lange, 1988). The central curriculum division disappeared, and the senior officer in charge of the trials left the Ministry.

The National Curriculum of New Zealand

In late 1990 and early 1991, two publications appeared which seem to reflect much of the feeling of the re-elected national Government on curriculum. *Tomorrow's Skills* (Callister and Haines, 1990 and 1991) was a brief report written by two members of the New Zealand Planning Council, an advisory body to government ironically dis-established by the July 1991 Budget. The report argued that shifts in the economy required a rethinking of priorities in schooling, proposing that New Zealand needed far more people educated at a high level in what are called 'generic skills for the new economy' (*Tomorrow's Skills* p. 15). The report posed a number of questions aimed at prompting schools to rethink the syllabus in several subjects. It also made some strong suggestions regarding the range of languages offered and the numbers of students taking them. French was singled out as a language of little significance to the conduct of trade, although the report notes it was taken by about 30 per cent of third formers in 1986 (*op cit*, p. 22).

A few months later the New Zealand 'Porter Project' was released (Crocombe, Enright, Porter *et al.*, 1991). This report was more open in its attack on education, claiming that the 'system has tended to focus on social objectives, rather than subjects with direct economic value' (p. 102). It argued for greater attention to the latter types of subject, included in which were the languages of New Zealand's trading partners: 'Competing successfully in international markets will require greater fluency in the languages of our customers. Increasingly, they are not likely to be European, let alone English-speaking.' The same paragraph named French as

the most popular foreign language 'even though France is of minor economic importance to New Zealand' (*op cit*, p. 103).

In May, 1991, *The National Curriculum of New Zealand* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1991) was released as a discussion document. Submissions on the document were received to the end of September, 1991. It was then expected that the final version would be publicly released early in 1992. As it happens, the release date was progressively postponed, and the final version was released in May, 1993 (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993). It is possible that a long-running dispute between the government and the secondary teachers' union may have been a factor. Yet, some months after the teachers had cancelled their moratorium on change, the final report still had not appeared, even though an amended version had been with the Minister since mid-1992.

The final version did reveal some changes, notably in the 'principles', which were almost completely rewritten. In late October, 1992, the Minister had told a principals' meeting that there would be an additional grouping of 'essential skills'; a group of 'physical skills' duly appeared. Other differences emerged: technology was no longer listed as a compulsory subject in Form V; and there were some wording changes in the revised list of 'essential learning areas'.

Most of the analysis which follows broadly applies to either document. Nevertheless, as it is the Draft version which most clearly spells out the government's own agenda, it is this May, 1991 document which is the focus for the remainder of this chapter.

The Foreword to the Draft *National Curriculum of New Zealand* (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1991; henceforth NCNZ) was written by the Minister. He makes it clear that this document was developed by the Ministry of Education, but that it is 'one of the key mechanisms for achieving the Government's goals for education.' (NCNZ, 1991, Foreword). The Introduction signals that several of the earlier curriculum documents mentioned above had been taken into account. Indeed there are some strong signs that the 1987 curriculum review has had some influence.

Nevertheless, NCNZ offers a new 'framework' for the curriculum up to and including the fifth form (normally the last year of compulsory schooling). This framework consists of five main parts:

1 A set of seven fundamental principles which give direction to the curriculum.
2 Seven 'Essential Learning Areas' which all students are expected to cover. These are: language, mathematics, science and environment, technology, social sciences, the arts, and physical and personal development.
3 Seven groupings of 'Essential Skills' and qualities to be developed by all learners. These groupings are: communication, numeracy,

information, problem-solving and decision-making, self-management, work and study, and social skills.

4 An outline of what will be sets of National Curriculum Objectives which will eventually define, in terms of clearly specified learning outcomes, what is expected of students at each of perhaps eight or ten levels of achievement.

5 An outline of assessment methods for both classroom-based and externally assessed monitoring of these learning outcomes.

(NCNZ, 1991)

It is not the intention here to analyse the NCNZ in detail, but a few points are necessary before approaching the focal issue of language, culture and the state. Most importantly, the role of currently taught schools 'subjects' is addressed in several places in the NCNZ. It is specified, for example, that each of the learning areas relates to one or more school subjects. For language, the NCNZ gives the following as 'examples of subjects commonly taught in schools at present': English, Maori, French, German, Japanese, Samoan, journalism, media studies (NCNZ, 1991, p. 10). The fact that Samoan is taught in only a tiny handful of school appears not to be important to the authors of the document. The year before the release of NCNZ, only eight of nearly 400 secondary schools offered a Pacific Island language. Samoan would have been the most common, but was not even separately listed in education statistics (Ministry of Education, 1991).

Interestingly, and perhaps significantly, Latin is missing from the list of examples of language subjects. Even though the numbers of students taking Latin has fallen sharply in recent years, this omission is hardly justifiable. In 1990, Latin was still taught in almost seventy secondary schools (Ministry of Education, 1991, p. 39). The virtual omission of Latin from another significant document on language, *Aotearoa; speaking for ourselves* (Waite, 1992), gives a strong indication that the study of a language for its cultural, literary and historical importance is not considered a priority (*cf.* below).

Using a selection from all the subjects listed as examples of essential learning areas in the NCNZ, a theoretically acceptable way of covering the eight learning areas would be as follows, with the learning area in parentheses: Maori (language); economics (mathematics); geography (science, environment and social sciences); home economics (technology); dance (the arts); and health (physical and personal development). Such a course would seemingly fit the intentions of this section of the NCNZ, even though it excludes English, mathematics, general science and physical education, all currently compulsory. The first three of these subjects have also been stressed as areas of importance by both industry and government. That such a course would be impossible in practice is nevertheless made clear elsewhere, notably when the report states that 'English,

mathematics, science and technology' will be compulsory to the end of the fifth form (NCNZ, 1991, p. 8). What is not so clear is how 'subjects' and 'learning areas' might be handled in practice in the new curriculum.

The confusion is not resolved by the NCNZ's own attempted clarification of the issue. The document notes the traditional use of subjects and assures that subject syllabuses will still be developed. It notes further that the essential learning areas are broad categories enabling the grouping of subjects similar in kind. What *that* means is quite unclear. It then goes on to say:

> The Essential Learning Areas and the subjects contributing to them are set out in the accompanying table, which takes account of the Government's view that each student should study the basic subjects of English, mathematics, science and technology to the end of F5. (NCNZ, 1991, p. 10).

A marginal note adds: 'Technology as a subject is still to be developed.' This presumably means that the reference is to the current school subjects. The issue is clouded rather than clarified by the three or four paragraph descriptions of the learning areas which follow. In the section on social sciences, for example, it would appear that students would be expected to cover elements of *all* the subjects listed as examples (social studies, history, geography, economics and cultural studies).

This raises some serious questions about whether and/or how the new curriculum proposals will mean changes in what schools offer. In the course of a 1991 research interview on curriculum, one secondary school principal told the writer that he had studied the NCNZ carefully and in terms of what his school currently offered he would not need to make any changes whatsoever. In view of the fact that industry and government criticisms clearly go beyond simply shuffling students from one subject to another and raising retention rates, this was an interesting comment. As a sideline comment here, the final version is arguably no more clear on these points.

The elaboration of the essential skills does seem more straightforward, although the section on numeracy skills appears to add little to what has been covered in the earlier section on mathematics as an essential learning area. The only comment to be made here is that students emerging from compulsory schooling with all of the listed skills would be somewhat different from those leaving today. To quote just four of the thirty-two listed skills:

- locate, gather, retrieve and process information effectively;
- make appropriate and responsible decisions;
- develop constructive responses to stress and conflict, success and failure;
- acquire the qualities of enterprise and initiative. (*op cit*, pp. 17–19)

Without the necessity to wonder about the possibility of schools effectively teaching such skills, it is worth noting that the ways in which these will be taught and assessed would require some major shifts in focus for schools. It is also possible that their very breadth will ensure that very little is done in practice.

Finally here, the section on national curriculum objectives re-opens the whole issue of subjects and learning areas. It is noted that each 'subject' has a number of 'achievement aims' and that deriving from each of these will be a set of 'more specific objectives, referred to as the achievement objectives'. These will be organized into levels. The number of levels may vary across subjects, but it is noted that 'the Government specified that for the basic subjects of English, mathematics, and science there will be eight or ten levels of achievement.' (*op cit*, p. 21)

Taken together, comments on the learning areas, skills, and objectives seems to imply that schools will in fact continue to teach subjects, but will need to ensure that students' choices of these subjects will cover all eight learning areas, all the skills, and enable the students to meet achievement requirements of a quite highly specific nature.

The release of the NCNZ was surrounded by a series of ministerial speeches in which particular aspects of the proposals have been stressed. The Minister noted the importance of the way in which the proposals integrate ideas on curriculum, teacher development and assessment. It is worth observing that the organization of current central structures does little to encourage such integration. The Ministry is concerned with developing policy, including letting contracts for syllabus development. A separate agency, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) controls assessment. Colleges of education and individual schools are mainly responsible for teacher development, the exception being national training for new syllabuses. National training in the past, however, has been limited to very small numbers of teachers. The costs of substantive training on a truly national basis for the whole of a new curriculum would lie well beyond current budget appropriations.

Two other areas of comment in ministerial speeches relate to the discussion which follows. First, there is a strong theme running through several speeches relating to education for economic productivity, along with an attack on the former Labor Government for what the Minister claims was an almost total concentration on social goals. This came out most strongly in his speech to the 1991 annual conference of the National Party:

> For six long years our education system was under attack from three successive Labor education ministers who shackled education to their left wing social agenda. . . . The future of our young people, indeed of all New Zealanders, is in jeopardy because of the stupidity of the social agenda pedalled by Labor. (Smith, 1991a, pp. 4–6)

In other parts of the same speech the Minister quotes with apparent approval from a magazine article which attacked teaching relating to the Treaty of Waitangi and gender issues while everywhere else children were learning to use computers. The message, then, appears to be clear: New Zealand children need to stop wasting time learning about social issues; they need to stay at school longer; and learn more in subjects that are truly of importance to the national economy. As pointed out elsewhere, however, substantial (and increasing) numbers of senior students have opted for 'more important' subjects in recent years — and under a Labor government (Peddie, 1991a).

Second, a late 1991 Press Association Report quoted the Minister as having some second thoughts about the place of technology. While it will be compulsory to the end of fourth form and available as a School Certificate subject, it appeared that he no longer intended it to be taken in the fifth form. Of equal significance was the statement that technology was likely to be introduced as a subject in 1995 at the earliest (*New Zealand Herald*, 16 September, 1991, Section 1, p. 5). In the final version (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993), the section on the essential learning area of technology makes it clear that it is no longer regarded as a separate subject at all (p. 3).

It is assumed here that the ministerial speeches are important as a way of interpreting the Government's views of NCNZ. This is so because of the Government's stated intention to make key decisions about curriculum. Taking both the NCNZ and those speeches into consideration, the general shift towards an economically driven national curriculum is plain, no matter what details still need to be clarified as the final version awaits gazetting.

Language, Secondary Schools and the National Curriculum

As a way of focusing on the issue of language in secondary schools and the NCNZ, an overview of New Zealand's linguistic situation may be useful. The vast majority of the population (over 85 per cent) are of European origin, and an even higher percentage are fluent English speakers. Maori are, however, the indigenous people of New Zealand. They speak a single language with some dialectal differences. After many years of virtual suppression, te reo Maori (Maori language), is undergoing a major revival, but estimates on how many Maori speak it fluently are not readily available.

In 1991, New Zealand moved to develop a national languages policy, along the lines of the Commonwealth Policy in Australia (Lo Bianco, 1987; Dawkins, 1991). As noted earlier, a discussion document was released in June, 1992, with submissions to be received by October 1, 1992. No

clear policy document (or decision) had been released by government by mid-1994 (*cf.* Peddie, 1993).

The 1991 estimate of the Maori population (including those who declare themselves to be Maori by descent), is approximately 12.5 per cent of the total New Zealand population. More significantly, the latest available figures show that Maori constituted approximately 20 per cent of the primary and secondary school population. Pacific Island Polynesian peoples make up a further 5 per cent, with Samoans the largest group (about 2 per cent). Recent arrivals of ethnic Chinese have taken that group to about 1.5 per cent of the population.

Other sizeable minorities who do not have English as their original first language include Dutch, Indians (including ethnic Indians from Fiji) and peoples from what was Yugoslavia. The majority of people in these groups have been in New Zealand for more than a generation, and no group constitutes more than about 1 per cent of the population.

Language and culture are inextricably intertwined for Maori. The same is true for most of the Pacific Islands peoples who live in New Zealand. Nevertheless, in 1994, bilingual education of some form in te reo Maori was offered in about 250 primary and secondary schools representing about 10 per cent of the total. Te reo Maori was offered as a language subject in about 70 per cent of secondary schools. Only about 10 per cent of all students studied te rea Maori in secondary schools, and half of these students were in their first year.

An interesting and important recent development is the kura kaupapa Maori, schools where all teaching is conducted in Maori, and where culture and language are totally integrated in the daily life of the school. In 1991, when the NZCZ appeared, there were eleven officially recognized schools, all at primary level. These schools have developed partly as a result of the success of the very widespread kohanga reo, or pre-school Maori 'language nests'. The kohanga reo began in 1982, and spread rapidly as a result of local Maori initiatives. There were over 800 kohanga in 1994, catering for more than 10,000 Maori pre-schoolers. This in turn has put pressure on local primary schools to develop more bilingual programs.

A handful of secondary school students studied Pacific Islands languages, even though quite large numbers of such students are currently at school, particularly in Auckland and Wellington. The most widely taught foreign languages are French (11 per cent of secondary students), Japanese (9 per cent), German (4 per cent) and Latin (1 per cent). Russian, Spanish, Mandarin and Indonesian were also offered in a few schools. One positive sign, however, is that increasing numbers of languages are offered in tertiary institutions.

As evidenced in several places in this chapter, and in the one following, language is clearly an issue of importance in curriculum discussions. To summarize so far:

- several commentators believe New Zealanders should be learning more trade-related languages;
- English but not Maori is compulsory according to the NCNZ (but see below);
- no other language is compulsory at any level in the NCNZ;
- the language attacked by name tends to be French;
- language learning in schools generally is a relatively unpopular area; and
- the learning of te reo Maori receives some public support from government, but sometimes comment is almost absent in other published reviews.

It is clear that language *is* seen as important in curriculum discourse, but the degree of importance for languages other than English (including te reo Maori), might be gauged by the fact that technology was proposed as a compulsory subject while languages remain in the area of 'opportunity'.

Interestingly enough, the Minister twice in 1991 made statements about language which appear to contradict what is stated in the NCNZ. Prior to its release he strongly implied that a second language would be compulsory. In his speech to the May 1991 curriculum conference he stated; 'Another new learning direction required by the proposed national curriculum is for students to learn a second language other than English' (Smith, 1991a).

Perhaps more significantly, as it followed the document's release, in two speeches to school principals the Minister signalled that Maori can replace English as one of the compulsory 'subjects' to form 5 (Smith, 1991b and 1991c). Such a statement was not made or even suggested in similar speeches to different audiences, nor is there any hint of this in the NCNZ. In fact, the NCNZ makes it quite plain that English will be compulsory, and that this is government policy. The final document (New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1993), preserves a certain amount of ambiguity by stating that Maori or English is compulsory in form 5, but immediately going on to say that a high standard of English is essential (pp. 9–10).

Notwithstanding these uncertainties, there has definitely been an ideological shift from the *National Curriculum Statement* (New Zealand Department of Education, 1988), to the NCNZ. This is especially true with regard to culture as an area of focus. Not only has the learning area 'culture and heritage' disappeared as a separate entity, but statements about culture are more muted, and the strong emphasis on equity has been sharply reduced. This is not surprising, given the Minister's 1991 statements on Labor's social agenda. These statements echo the earlier attack in the Porter Project (Crocombe, Enright, Porter *et al.*, 1991). Similarly, Maori are not mentioned in the Minister's foreword, nor does the word

'culture' appear. Instead, the Foreword signals that the NCNZ will help young New Zealanders to:

> acquire the essential knowledge, understanding, and skills which will enable them to compete in the modern international economy. This is essential if New Zealand is to achieve the standards which, as a small trading nation, it needs in order to prosper alongside other nations in the international market place.

There *is* recognition of culture and cultural difference in the NCNZ. Principle 5 notes the need to provide entry points to the curriculum for those from different cultural and geographical backgrounds, implying, however, a deficit model of cultural difference. Principle 6 asserts that 'The National Curriculum will ensure that the experiences, values, cultural traditions, histories and languages of all New Zealanders are recognised' and that 'The unique place of Maori, and of their language and culture, will be acknowledged' (NZCZ, 1991, pp. 6–7). These statements should, however, be compared with that in the *National Curriculum Statement*, which has a much stronger emphasis on the importance of Maori in particular and culture in general. These include injunctions to acknowledge the 1840 Treaty of Waitangi, to foster multi-cultural respect, to promote equity, to help students to understand and be confident in their own culture . . . the list goes on (1988, pp. 7–10).

Statements on language do not at first sight differ greatly between the 1988 and the 1991 documents. Both make it clear that English is essential; both argue that all Maori should have the opportunity to learn their own language; both support the notion of all students having the chance to learn another language. There are one or two subtle differences. The *National Curriculum Statement* suggested that all students should have some knowledge of Maori 'as an important, natural part of school life' (New Zealand Department of Education, 1988, p. 10). It also includes, as noted earlier, culture and heritage as one of its eight 'aspects of learning'. The NCNZ notes that all students will 'have the opportunity to develop the ability and confidence to communicate competently in Maori' (p. 11). There is no separate learning area covering culture and heritage in either version.

Of the 1988 and 1991 approaches to te reo Maori, it is possible to see the latter statement as expressing a rather more vague though desirable language goal, but the former an immediately important and more practicable aim. The 1988 document specifies the learning of other languages as a road to understanding and linguistic awareness. The NCNZ does mention similar goals in its general elaboration on why language is important, noting that language is 'a vital medium for transmitting culture' (p. 11). When commenting specifically on the role of other languages, however,

it simply mentions 'opportunities for students to achieve proficiency in community and foreign languages, including those used by our Pacific and Asian neighbours and trading partners' (*ibid*).

Like its predecessors, the NCNZ shies away from more specific statements about which languages should be taught or learned and where. While statements about the languages to be learned make some sense, it does not recognize the issues which — it is to be hoped — a national languages policy will address, but which are also *curriculum* issues. These include a clearer statement about the role and importance of te reo Maori in New Zealand, particularly as the Maori population continues to rise. Both in terms of its effect on Maori school achievement and retention rates, and with a growing number of job opportunities where the language *can* be used in employment, the significance of te reo Maori needs to be much more clearly articulated. It must be recognized, however, that this is a matter of considerable debate and political sensitivity. It has been suggested elsewhere that if Maori voters were not mainly confined to the four traditionally Labor-held seats, then moves on te reo Maori might be much faster and more decisive (Peddie, 1989).

It can be argued that, although the NCNZ recognizes the unique place of Maori as tangata whenua (People of the Land), in New Zealand, it separates curriculum ideas relating to te reo Maori and Maori culture. This separation began with the 1988 *National Curriculum Statement*, where, despite the fact that it included culture and heritage, this learning aspect was separated from language. Neither, however, is te reo Maori treated as a language of commercial value or even significance in daily use. Taken together, it can be argued that te reo Maori — for both non-Maori and Maori alike — is seen as a matter of heritage rather than as a language of contemporary importance and value. In the light of the Minister's 'Foreword' and his speeches since the release of the NCNZ, it must be added that heritage learning does not seem to have a high priority.

Second, there has been little attempt to reconcile the current lack of language learning — and of qualified language teachers — with the statements of intent in the NCNZ, and other ministerial documents since, or the urgings of industrialists and others. A number of secondary schools, most but not all quite small, do not offer any languages other than English at present. Several of the languages of important or emerging trading partners, such as Korean, Arabic, Italian and Thai, are not yet offered in any secondary school, although a pilot scheme in Korean may begin in 1995. Mandarin, Russian, Spanish and Indonesian together in 1994 attracted a total of about 0.5 per cent of all secondary students. The preparation of well-qualified and effective languages teachers takes many years, and New Zealand has not looked seriously at re-equipping teachers already in the system with new languages (Peddie, 1991c).

Third, there is no attention given in the NCNZ as to how languages might fit in to what students might actually be studying in the fifth form,

the last year of compulsory subjects in the NCNZ. In terms of what the draft specifies, students would presumably be taking English, science, mathematics and technology. As the majority of students have traditionally taken only five subjects for School Certificate, this would leave only one slot to cover a vast range of subjects. It is clear that many of these subjects would be seen by parents as commercially and economically more desirable than a foreign language (e.g., economic studies, typing, accountancy, horticulture).

Here there were changes in the final document (New Zealand Department of Education, 1991). In the September 1991 press report cited earlier, the Minister suggested that it might be desirable for all students to take six subjects for school Certificate. Coupled with the withdrawal of technology as a separate compulsory subject in the fifth form, this could be seen as opening up student options more widely. Yet students are still definitely expected to cover all seven learning areas, and the opportunities for language study remain potentially restricted.

This brief analysis of the NCNZ and of ministerial speeches which followed its release suggests that language is currently perceived largely in instrumental terms. What does *not* seem to be recognized in the NCNZ or indeed in other curriculum documents noted earlier is that achieving proficiency in a second language to the point where trade and other specialist forms of communication are seriously contemplated does not happen over the few years of a typical secondary school language program. Such proficiency requires a large amount of time, considerable effort (if as here learning takes place in a country where language is not readily available), and a serious study of the culture. Indeed, without a profound understanding of the culture, linguistic knowledge would be relatively useless for trade or other applied purposes. Yet the NCNZ seems to imply that language is principally a tool to be acquired, with the implication that this tool could be used productively to win economic benefits through trade with other countries.

New Zealand in Comparative Perspective

The New Zealand approach taken to curriculum in general, and to language and culture in particular, is not unique. Other English-speaking countries have tended to reflect developments something like that outlined in preceding paragraphs. It is true that languages are compulsory in some of these countries or in individual states. It must not be thought, however, that simply because a language other than English is compulsory for some part of schooling that the situation is radically different from that outlined in New Zealand.

If the purposes of the compulsion are social, cultural *and* economic, then we might expect: provision for well-trained teachers; generous time

allowances with small classes; the incorporation of substantial cultural material into the program; and well-planned strategies to encourage students into advanced and specialized courses. A glance at contemporary practices suggests this is rarely the case.

New Zealand does face a complex and perhaps unusual language situation at present. It is an English-speaking country containing another large linguistic community who are the indigenous people, from an ethnic group different from the majority, and whose language is not spoken elsewhere in the world. At the same time, it is a small trading nation and there are definitely too few speakers and fluent interpreters for some key languages. How many speakers might actually be required for trade purposes is a separate issue and one beyond the scope of this chapter.

The way language is treated in recent curriculum statements in New Zealand does not handle well this dual issue of internal cultural imperatives and the need for international languages of trade. The NCNZ itself is ambivalent on this issue. What needs to be taken into account, moreover, is the political context in which the document has been promulgated. The ministerial speeches are arguably a more accurate reflection of where the true curriculum goals may lie, because of the international trends towards more direct political control over education signalled earlier in this chapter. In that more political context, the purposes for which languages are to be learned appear to be skill-based, economically oriented, and — somewhat absurdly — 'culture-free'.

Notes

1 This chapter is based on a revised and updated version of Peddie (1991b).

2 The author wishes to acknowledge the ready provision by the Minister of Education of this and other speeches referred to in this chapter.

Chapter 9

Shifting Negotiations: A Case Study of Lower Secondary School English Syllabuses in Western Australia

Marnie O'Neill

In this chapter, the focus of discussion will be the ways in which the concept of curriculum negotiation has varied in different syllabus developments within the subject area of English, and the consequent effects on definition of the subject area, the role of the teacher, and the degree of opportunity for the teacher to make decisions about the operational syllabus.

The concept of 'negotiation' in curriculum discourse has been a fluid one. One conceptualization has located the negotiation process with the various power groups in educational settings interested in the design and development of the curriculum package (MacDonald and Walker, 1976). A different version, arguing for 'empowerment' of teachers and students in the teaching–learning interaction has located negotiation in the individual classroom (Boomer Ed, 1982). A more recent phenomenon has been negotiation at system level, including power groups that might not traditionally have been involved in development of school curricula. This discussion considers the effects of negotiations at the design and development (ideational) levels, and the impact that those negotiations have on the opportunities for teachers to negotiate the operational curriculum (i.e., the curriculum as 'housed').

The rhetoric of 'negotiation' in curriculum development and implementation has previously been presumed to be of a consensual kind, in which the product (syllabus documents or curriculum packages, for example) is purveyed as an agreed-upon statement. Here, it is argued that the process is characterized less by consensus than by contestation, and that the resulting syllabus statements, far from being agreed upon, are actually documents manifesting deep ideological divisions produced by a series of trade-offs and compromises between competing positions and interest groups.

MacDonald and Walker (1976) conceived of negotiation as being located between the project team of developers and the world of academia

(product idealization) on the one hand and the world of professional practice (product implementation) on the other. They posit a gap between the two worlds and between the two images of the curriculum, which it is the role of the project developers to bridge (see MacDonald and Walker, 1976, p. 45). MacDonald and Walker argue that the expectations of the two parties are discrepant. (see table 9.1)

Table 9.1: Contrasting expectations of curriculum (adapted from MacDonald and Walker, 1976 pp. 47–9)

Academics' Expectations	Practitioners' Expectations
1 A 'non-divisive' view of the curriculum needs of the pupil	1 Offering solutions tailored to the less-able adolescent
2 A high estimate of the ability of the low-achieving pupil	2 Based on a 'realistic' view of the achieving limitations of the pupil
3 A fully articulated theory of pedagogy its content area	3 Respecting their autonomy with regard in to classroom practice
4 A new curriculum that embodies the latest conception of the subject held by university scholars	4 Offering reinforcement to their professional identity

In polarizing the areas of conflict in this fashion, MacDonald and Walker imply that there is unity of views within the two opposing camps. In the case of the academics, for instance, it suggests that there is a unified position on the latest conception of the subject, and that academics who support residual or competing constructions of the subject either do not exist or did not participate. Similarly, it seems that teachers as a group have a professional identity, which would be reinforced or supported by a particular syllabus construction, but not by others. In this chapter, the view is taken that among academics there are competing constructions of disciplined knowledge and that this will lead to conflicting positions being taken in the development of a syllabus or curriculum package. As well, teachers will have differing views of the subject based on the parent discipline and on the appropriate pedagogy, the latter dependent upon factors such as when and where they acquired their degree, and equally when and where they undertook their teacher education studies, and any subsequent professional development activities.

It can be argued that the ideological orientations taken to the subject area construct both teachers and the syllabus documents. Different orientations allow different opportunities and degrees of negotiation in both the development and implementation phases. Therefore in this chapter some space is devoted to a consideration of different orientations to English, and the ways in which teachers read syllabus statements, before examining specific instances of syllabus change in lower secondary school English in Western Australia.

Orientations to English

Different orientations to English have different ideological bases, constructing competing views of what is to be learned, how it is to be learned and what the roles of teacher and learner in the pedagogical arena might be. Currently there seem to be four competing orientations to English as a subject area (figure 9.1).

Each of these orientations implies a different degree of possible negotiation, at the stages of syllabus development and implementation. Ball, Kenny and Gardiner (1990) provide an interesting analysis of the relationships between established power (Authority) and the people (Authenticity) and the interests of the individual (Self) and the group (Not Self). These competing interests are represented in figure 9.2.

In this model, the horizontal axis represents the interests of the individual, as opposed to the collective interests of the group. At the extreme left of the continuum, the interests of the individual are given priority (i.e., self), with little emphasis on responsibilities to the group; conversely, at the far right, the interests of the group are paramount (i.e., not-self). The individual is regarded primarily as a group member whose private needs and interests are subordinated to those of the group. The vertical axis represents the polarity between the authorities (identified by Ball, Kenny and Gardiner as the state, the management or the leadership) and the people.

In this model, social decisions taken from the top-down are characterized as abstract, prescriptive, positivist, objective and reified, in contrast to bottom–up decisions which are presented as immediate, negotiable, interpretive, subjective and authentic (Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990, pp. 76–77). Thus in the bottom left quadrant, for example, the focus of attention is on life experience, interests and development of the individual, 'cherishing private souls' (Barnes and Barnes, 1983), rather than on the contribution of the individual to the collective welfare of the group, promoting shared interests. In the bottom left quadrant, although a focus of attention is still at the level of 'authenticity' of life experience, it is in the context of group membership and participation, promoting critical social commentary in the interests of the group, opposed if necessary to the interests of the state and its various institutions. In each of these lower quadrants, content and competencies are likely to be less tightly prescribed in the syllabus, leaving opportunity for negotiation between class teacher and syllabus, and between class teacher and students. In contrast, orientations located in the top two quadrants are likely to be characterized by tighter prescription in syllabus statements mandated by authorities external to the school. Although the locus of authority is the state, negotiation of content and competencies might take place between the state and employer bodies or tertiary education institutions, where the interests are

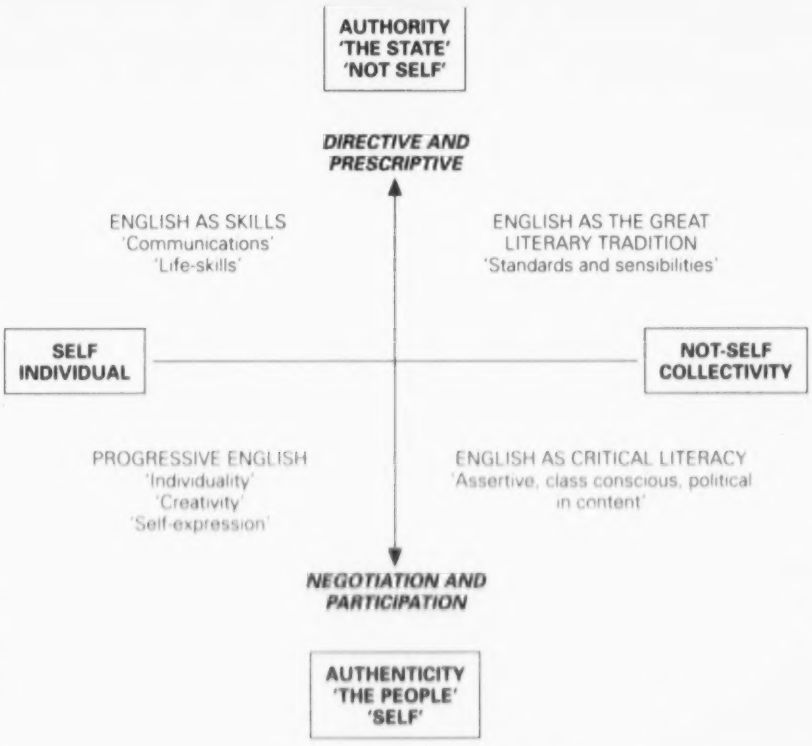
Figure 9.1: Attributing characteristic key values and roles to different orientations to English

English as Skills: Functional English *Key values*: Knowledge about language, standard forms and genres; production of useful citizens. *Role of teacher*: Inculcation of knowledge about language; demonstration of standard forms and uses; correction of student products. *Role of learner*: Assimilation of knowledge about language; application and practice of standard forms and uses; analysis and criticism of models. *Key figures*: M. Scriven.	**Cultural Heritage: English as the great tradition** *Key values*: Conservation and transmission of the canon of great works of literature; production of keepers of the cultural flame; perpetuation of universal human themes and values. *Role of teacher*: Transmission of knowledge and values of the cultural tradition; induction of students into the language of literary criticism. *Role of learner*: Assimilation of information about the literary tradition and great works; interpretation and reproduction of the 'right response'; assimilation of literary critical discourse; development of moral and aesthetic sensibility. *Key figures*: F. R. Leavis; E. D. Hirsch; A. S. Bloom.
Progressive English (elsewhere known as Growth Model English, Whole Language, New Literacy or Personal Growth) *Key values*: Respect for the individual qualities of the learner; child-centred, experiential, exploration of language in use for production of personal meanings and growth in language competence; production of self-actualizing individuals. *Role of teacher*: Facilitation of language-rich experiences and contexts; collaboration and negotiation with the learner; provision of appropriate resources and information as the learner needs them. *Role of learner*: Participation and engagement in learning experiences; articulation of personal response; cooperation and collaboration in learning experiences; respect for responses and products of other learners. *Key figures*: J. Britton; D. Barnes; H. Rosen; J. Moffett; G. Boomer; J. Willinsky.	**Radical English: Cultural Criticism** *Key values*: Recognition of cultural construction of texts and readings, and the values and interests privileged in each; promotion of equity and power for minorities; production of critical citizens. *Role of teacher*: Foreground ways in which texts are constructed; make accessible/visible cultural assumptions and stereotypes; make vailable alternative readings; promote construction of critical readings. *Role of learner*: Analysis of construction of texts; production of alternative readings; identification of attitudes and values privileged by particular readings; production of alternative texts. *Key figures*: T. Eagleton; C. Belsey; S. Ball; A. Kenny and D. Gardiner; W. Green.

in pre-requisites for entry to further study or employment, rather than development of the individual or local level community interests. In either case, the possibilities for the class teacher to negotiate at the development or implementation levels will be minimal.

Each of the orientations also produces a different orientation to text,

Figure 9.2 English and forms of literacy (adapted from Ball, Kenny and Gardiner, 1990, pp. 75–6)



and the locus of authority in production of meaning (see tables 9.2 and 9.3). In these tables, the residual orientation leaves the least amount of space for negotiation. The values informing the orientation privilege 'good' literature, defined by aesthetics or cultural values and is, in pedagogical terms, located in a training mode — aesthetic sensibilities, literary skills and moral instruction, and values formation.

The sorts of textual questions produced from this model imply production of right responses, and universal human attitudes and values. Authority for the production of meaning is shared by the author and the text, rather than negotiated by readers.

The orientation described as dominant in tables 9.2 and 9.3 shares authority for meaning between reader and text, in that reading is seen as a transaction between reader and text, in which what the reader brings to the text is at least as important as what is on the page. Individuals can be expected to produce different readings of texts based on different life

Table 9.2: Textual ideologies (O'Neill, 1992b, p. 221)

Residual	Dominant	Emergent
There is a meaning in the text put there by the author, which readers can be trained to uncover.	Literature reflects life.	Texts are sites for construction of plural, often conflicting and contradictory meanings.
(Good) texts are universal, unified and consistent.	Readers bring their personal experiences to texts and make their own meanings.	Texts promote interested versions of reality.
Texts are the unique creations of inspired authors.	Different readings of the same texts are due to differences in personal interpretation.	Texts and readings are always partial — in both* senses of the word.
Interaction with the text places the reader in direct communication with the mind of the writer.	Interaction with the text provides a 'lived through' experience for the reader.	Texts activate or generate readings from a range of readings differentially available to different groups of readers.
Literature is a means of moral instruction and values formation.	Reflection on the experience of text and life allows the individual reader to verify or modify their construction of self and social reality.	Analysis of the ways in which particular groups are represented in texts offers the possibility of challenging cultural value positions.
(Good) literature develops the aesthetic sensibilities of the sensitive reader.	Literature offers examples of possible ways of being.	Texts, are in a sense, always already read and already written.
Focusing on characterization is a natural way to read a text.	Characters can be treated as if they were real people with mental interiors and motivations, with whom it is possible to empathize.	Empathic reading through character is a learned practice.

experiences, attitudes and values. The tenet that literature reflects life and is on the same continuum, however, offers the opportunity for construction and modification of self, social realities and attitudes and values by the consistent requirement to read self in relation to text, as the kinds of questions in table 9.3 indicate. As has been argued elsewhere (O'Neill, 1990; Patterson, 1989) readings produced in this orientation are not infinite in their variety, and pedagogical practices operate to modify divergent readings towards the norm.

The emergent orientation suggests that meanings are not fixed, but negotiable between competing interests and positions. As in personal response (dominant) reading practices, readers are required to locate themselves within a particular reading or position, but can apply available discourses or positions to the text to produce alternative readings, or to

Table 9.3 Different orientations — different questions (O'Neill, 1992b, p. 222)

Residual	Dominant	Emergent
What is the theme of this story?	What do you think this story is about?	What are the possible readings of this text?
What is the writer's intention?	What kind of person is the sports teacher?	How does the text position the reader?
How does the writer help us experience the pleasures and pitfalls of mountain climbing?	What do you think will happen to the character when he returns home?	Which characters are assigned marginal roles in the text?
How does the writer develop the child's feeling of fear?	Have you ever experienced being afraid?	What existing readings of character are activated by this text?
To what extent do the characters reveal themselves by what they say?	Why do you think the characters acted in this way?	How are cultural issues of race, gender, class or religion produced in this text?
Identify the attitudes of the main characters towards the police	In what ways do people behave like this in real life?	Which attitudes and values are endorsed or challenged by this text?
What is the tone of the poem?	How do you think the story should have ended?	Are any alternative endings for this story plausible?
What fundamental questions about human existence are raised in this play?	In what ways is this story still relevant today?	How would these alternatives have shifted or closed off possible readings of this text?
Why has the writer chosen to write in this way?	In this situation, how would you have behaved?	

interrogate the text and its construction. In either of the latter orientations, texts are less likely to be prescribed, leaving a teacher freer to negotiate text selections appropriate to the needs and interests of the students.

Although these orientations to English have been characterized to highlight their differences, syllabuses are sometimes hybrids of different orientations. (e.g., the Tripod Curriculum: language, literature and composition.) In such a case, the contributing orientations might be classified as residual, dominant and emergent, according to the degree and history of their influence on the syllabus. In Australia, at present, the cultural heritage model described in figure 9.1 might be regarded as residual, progressive English as dominant, and radical English (cultural criticism) as emergent. The functional English model is more problematic; ten or so years ago, it might have been regarded as a residual model, but recent demands for its inclusion (Scriven, 1984; Gottliebsen, 1990; Mayer, 1990) suggest that it has become a re-emergent model.

Different orientations to text produce different reading practices and promote different kinds of questions (see table 9.3: *Different orientations — different questions*). Therefore a syllabus constructed in a particular ideological framework should construct particular teaching practices for the teacher and, logically, produce in students particular reading practices and kinds of knowledge about texts. By extension, it also defines for teachers the kinds of outcomes that might be assessed, and for examiners the kinds of questions it is permissible to ask in examining the syllabus (see O'Neill, 1992a, for a fuller discussion of this).

Reading the Syllabus

Traditional positions on implementation of syllabus statements locate authority for production of meaning from a syllabus statement with the text: that is, the published syllabus and any other documentation that can be seen as part of the official syllabus statement. The implicit assumption is that teachers should produce a right reading of the syllabus to operationalize it appropriately in their classrooms. It is questionable that this is the case.

Given that a syllabus statement is a text from which readers must construct meanings on which to plan actions, teachers must interpret syllabus statements on the basis of their pre-constructed conceptualizations of English, and their pedagogical theory of what it means to teach and learn in English. That is, they privilege the parts of the syllabus which approximate most closely their current position, they put on hold, or marginalize what is incongruent or in conflict with their theoretical position and try to construct a course and legitimate their practice from that. Jenkins and Shipman (1976, p. 63) describe this as a 'filleting' process in which teachers extract the bits of the document that they recognize as consonant with the ways in which they construct practice, and reject or ignore those parts which have a poor degree of fit with their constructs. In addition, in the interests of reducing the amount of trauma for themselves, teachers are likely to read to support their existing pedagogical practices to minimize the sense of being temporarily de-skilled, and to reduce the risks in their own classrooms (Apple, 1982; MacDonald and Walker, 1976). In change theory terms, this process leads to drastic mutation rather than straightforward adoption of the syllabus.

A number of Australian studies indicate that competing orientations to English construct the ways in which teachers approach both the syllabus and their students. Studies by Martin (Education Department of Western Australia, 1980) and Piper (1983) indicate that even where syllabus development is strongly centralized, teachers have different orientations to English which are evident in their differing classroom practices. Where the syllabus in less strongly framed externally, teachers have greater freedom to vary their practices according to their own orientations and the

perceived needs of their students (Medway, 1980; Barnes and Barnes, 1984).

A small number of studies has addressed the ways in which teachers using the same syllabus take different orientations to texts, reading practices and production of meaning. Mares' (1986) study, 'Doing English: An ethnography' involved fourteen teachers, of whom four were teaching Year 12 matriculation English classes. In her study Mares identified three teaching practices and discourses which she classified as didactic, interpretive and interrogative. Mares claimed that the different modes of teaching adopted by each of the teachers results in the students' acquisition of different cultural knowledge and different reading practices (Mares, 1986, pp. 102–3).

Cullen (1991) examined the process of syllabus change and implementation in the Western Australian Tertiary Entrance Examination (TEE) syllabus for English Literature from the perspective of the ways in which teachers interpreted and implemented a revised syllabus. Cullen concluded that the syllabus structure finally approved for examination was a deeply divided document. It retained a generic structure and a Leavisite Cultural heritage-New Critical orientation for three sections (poetry, novel and drama) and introduced a culturally critical or post-modernist orientation for the new section of the syllabus, 'Issues in Context'. The examination further weighted New Critical approaches by including a Textual Analysis option. Because academics on the syllabus committee felt that teachers might need some assistance in implementing the new section of the syllabus (see MacDonald and Walker, 1976), it was decided to provide support materials for each Issue. Different tertiary institutions in Western Australia took responsibility for different Issues.

Cullen's case-study data showed that teachers selected 'issues us context' for which the 'support material' was prepared by academics from those universities in which the teachers had done their first degrees. (This information was not provided in the 'support materials'.) The only case-study teacher who did not do this was attempting to base his teaching on the 'support materials' (produced by Murdoch academics) and was producing mixed practices in his classroom.

A further Western Australian example is reported in Hughes' 1992 study. In this research, Hughes studied two teachers of Year 12 TEE English, working in the same department and using the same program developed from the TEE English syllabus statement. Hughes' research demonstrated that the two teachers were located in different orientations to English, which in turn produced different classroom practices, based on privileging different aspects of the syllabus statement. Although there were common elements in their practices, the two teachers asked students to address different kinds of questions in relation to the texts studied. The logical outcome of such differential preparation is that the two groups of students would have been differentially prepared to answer the same

examination questions, raising questions at one level at least, about the validity, reliability and equity of the teaching and examination practices.

These studies provide evidence that negotiation of the syllabus also occurs in transactions between teachers and the syllabus documents, as teachers produce readings on which they base their operational syllabus. A syllabus statement located in the progressive English orientation is likely to give more scope for teachers to negotiate with the document than is a syllabus located in either skills or cultural heritage orientations.

A Retrospective Account of Curriculum Development and Implementation in Secondary School English

Curriculum design, development and implementation in Western Australia has been very centralized with authority located in the Education Department of Western Australia (re-named the Ministry of Education 1987–1993). Impetus for change tended to come from Education Department sponsored reports (e.g., Dettman 1965; Petch 1969; Martin, 1980; McGaw, 1984; Beazley, 1984; see also Angus, Chapter 1 in this volume). Prior to 1969, examination of student attainment on exit from school either at the end of three years of secondary schooling, or a further two years of senior secondary schooling was through external examinations administered by the Public Examinations Board (PEB), controlled by the University of Western Australia, the only university of the time. The Dettman Report (1965) recommended dis-establishment of the PEB and the external examination at the end of lower secondary school (Year 10, i.e., the third year of secondary school), and the establishment of a statutory Board of Secondary Education (BSE), which was to serve the interests of both government and non-government schools.

Assessment of student achievement in the first three years of secondary school was to be school based, moderated by board-administered tests and two-yearly moderation visits by the BSE moderator in each core subject area. The syllabuses for lower secondary school were developed by teams of curriculum writers, overseen by the subject superintendent(s) of education. At senior secondary level, the functions of the PEB were taken over by joint syllabus committees for each Tertiary Admissions Examination (TAE, later Tertiary Entrance Examination or TEE) subject, under the auspices of the BSE (later, the Secondary Education Authority, or SEA). The procedures for syllabus development approximated MacDonald and Walker's (1976) model of negotiation.

Lower secondary school

At the lower secondary school level, syllabus change in English since 1969 has been the result of system-wide structural change, rather than revision

within the subject area of English. The recommendations of the Dettman Report (1965) offered the opportunity for syllabus design in English to move from a structure located predominantly in the upper right quadrant of figure 9.2, to a syllabus design located in the lower left quadrant. Influenced by outcomes of the Dartmouth conference (1966) and by contact — formal and informal — of superintendents of English and the London School (academics located in English Education at the London Institute of Education), the lower secondary school English syllabus statement was informed by the ideas of language and learning, language experience, personal response to literature and the notion of a continuum between literature and life.

A typical example of the syllabus statements of the time is *First Year English* (Education Dept of WA, 1974), consisting of two pages of general and specific aims and objectives and 160 pages of theoretical and practical advice to heads of departments and class teachers on how to develop an English course or program. The two general aims proposed by the English Curriculum Committee (membership unacknowledged) were:

1 To give the student, through literature and discussion, an enriched and deeper understanding of his (*sic*) own experience, promote his effective participation in the world in which he lives and his enjoyment of it, and develop his sensitivity and imagination.
2 To develop the student's powers of communication, his (*sic*) ability to observe, think, listen, read, speak and write.

In pursuing these aims, it was argued that the teacher of English would make a special contribution to even broader aims of a complete educational program, to develop in the student:

- a thoughtful attitude on questions of personal behaviour and social responsibility;
- understanding and tolerance of others;
- critical attitudes towards changes and a readiness to accept and control the process of change;
- skills of self-education.

(Education Department of Western Australia, 1974, p. 3)

Teachers were offered some general advice on translating these aims into specific classroom practices. The basic assumption was that language was the medium of operation in the English classroom, and that the total English program should be seen in the following ways:

- The use of language in the spheres of observing, thinking, listening, reading, speaking and writing.
- The quality of language use by each student will be affected by the nature and quality, relevance and interest, of language experience

offered by the teacher in terms of the source material and activities which he (*sic*) plans and presents.

- The students' use of language and powers of communication will be best stimulated, encouraged and improved by activities which get him (*sic*) listening, talking, reading, writing, acting out, discovering, drawing . . .
- In choosing source material and planning his (*sic*) program, the teacher must realize that his students will differ in their ability to listen, to express themselves orally, to read, to write and so on. It is his responsibility to cater, as best he can, for these differences.
- The aim for each student should be to achieve, in each task he (*sic*) attempts, the best of which he is capable.

(Education Department of Western Australia, 1974, p. 3)

The position taken here embeds English as an activity, in the progressive orientation of personal growth to be achieved by tailoring the operational curriculum to the needs and interest of the individual child. Within this broad general framework, English teachers were to decide on specific objectives suited to the abilities and needs of individual students in each class. However, some starting points were offered:

Observation

- To make the best of his (*sic*) inherent ability to examine and respond to all things which make up his total environment.
- To sharpen and develop his (*sic*) skills of observation so that he observes with increasing sensitivity and enjoyment.

Listening

- To listen with comprehension.
- To listen in order to share ideas and hear new ones.

Oral fluency

- To achieve a level of oral fluency which enables him (*sic*) to speak in a natural and satisfying way with his friends, teachers and family.
- To speak effectively for a specific purpose and to a specific audience.
- To share his (*sic*) ideas and express his needs with confidence and sincerity.

Reading ability

- To read independently and with understanding.
- To read for pleasure.

- To improve his (*sic*) reading ability so that realistic gains expressed in terms of reading age compared with chronological age may be detected.
- To read material appropriate to his (*sic*) maturity and changing interests.

Written communication

- To achieve a level of written communication which enables him (*sic*) to express his thoughts, needs and opinions.
- To improve his (*sic*) ability to write clearly and relevantly for specific social and vocational purposes.
- To express his (*sic*) imagination and creativity in written form.

Thinking

a) Critical Awareness

- To encourage and develop the student's critical response to what he hears, sees and reads.
- To broaden his critical awareness of attitudes, experiences, interests and needs relating to human values which differ from his own.

b) Making effective judgments

- To develop the student's ability to reason and make effective judgments on the basis of his reasoning.

Personal standards

- To reach a level of interest and achievement in his (*sic*) work which expresses itself in self-respect — in a desire to present his work in a manner that is meaningful and attractive to others so that they may appreciate and share his own interest.

With the exception of reading at chronological age, all objectives are open ended; any notion of gain or improvement is described in terms of individual attainment. All are constructed as processes, with no markers to indicate what might constitute growth or improvement, or what might be appropriate gains at any particular stage in the three years of lower secondary schooling. Further, on the basis of these aims, objectives and principles, teachers were to design courses to meet the individual needs and interests of the students in their classes. No resources were prescribed,

or even recommended, although the last sixty pages of *First Year English* (Education Dept of WA, 1974) consisted of reviews of resource materials.

In other subject areas, courses were differentiated and students were streamed according to student ability; in English, students were streamed according to achievement on the BSE placement tests, but it was an expectation (not fulfilled) that there would be considerable mobility between streams. Because responsibility for course development in English was located in the school, there was no such thing as a generally accepted or recognized course at advanced, intermediate or basic levels, although a 'Basic Level Guide' was produced to offer teachers some support in planning programs and activities suitable for students at this level. Student assessment was based on the ability of teachers to agree upon and grade work at each level. Teachers were thus expected to design their own courses, negotiating with students or not as they saw fit, and to negotiate student assessments with their peers. In Boomer's (1982) terms, they were 'empowered' by the syllabus statement.

The decision to implement a syllabus structure of this kind was top-down. Although the Achievement Certificate structure was trialled in twelve pilot schools for one year before all government schools were required to implement it, most teachers (including new graduates) were largely uninformed about the principles and possible practices of the new English. Pre-service teacher education for secondary English teachers typically comprised a degree in English Literature from the University of Western Australia (UWA) and an end-on Diploma in Education or Teachers' Certificate from the then Secondary Teachers' College (STC). A literature degree from UWA at the time was located predominantly in Leavisite or New Critical practices which were not congruent with progressive English. In 1969, STC was not well equipped with syllabus guidelines for Achievement Certificate English; consequently, new graduates were little better informed about the new syllabus or appropriate pedagogical practices than the more experienced teachers in the schools.

Assessment became a key issue:

> When the external public examination (Junior certificate), was abolished (end of 1971 for Government schools), there was not sufficient confidence, either in the community or among teachers themselves, to do without some external measure of comparability. Consequently in the early years of the Achievement Certificate, much emphasis was placed on comparability testing and placing students in 'correct' levels (advanced, intermediate or basic). Much of the emphasis in in-service work was placed on establishing comparable standards of written work, methods of assessment, and how to distinguish the work of a student working at advanced level from that of one working at intermediate or basic level. (Education Department of W.A., 1980, p. 29)

In spite of the emphasis on accountability for the end product, there was an expectation that the classroom processes in English were characterized by ongoing negotiation:

> A view of the English classroom 'as a place where students meet to share experience of some importance' (Dixon, 1967) is a significant change, and is itself part of a *changing conception of learning which gives a different meaning to teaching*. It represents a move away from the ages old transmission model with the teacher as the fount of all knowledge and power towards a model based on negotiations between teachers and students.
>
> . . . a model based on negotiations implies talking together to arrive at something agreed. James Britton uses the phrase 'shaping at the point of utterance' to connect the formulations we make in words with the moment-by-moment interpretive process by which we make sense of what is happening.' Intentions and understandings come together in the various acts of speech. Talk in such a learning environment is the prime mover of work in English. *(op cit*, p. 54)

This description might lead to the conclusion that negotiations were limited to discussions of the various kinds of texts, and life experiences that found their ways into the new English classroom, but the Martin Report was explicit in the expectation that learners would assume a larger role in construction of the operational curriculum:

> Michael Halliday describes language using as the process of meaning gathering, (Halliday, 1975) or making sense of one's experience in which what we bring is as much a part of learning as what we take. It is this view of the learner sharing in the responsibility for his (*sic*) own learning which is changing the conception of teaching. This shared responsibility includes taking work on, carrying it through, and to an increasing extent in English, a choice of content — books, topics, assignments, The whole business of teaching and learning in English is becoming more of a collaboration between partners in a joint enterprise. Some of the partners are of course, senior partners, but partners nevertheless. . . . (Education Department of WA., 1980, p. 55)

These expectations were taken up to some extent. Kinsella and Reid (Boomer, 1982) detailed negotiated units of work done in English classes, and Cook, in the same volume, outlines an approach to negotiated programming practices. Of these, only Kinsella's was an account by an English

teacher of negotiating with a class she taught on a regular basis. Reid, an advisory teacher located in Head Office, was team-teaching with an English teacher in a metropolitan school. The topic she selected, and the content and processes negotiated with the students could have as easily taken place in a social studies program. Kinsella negotiated individual contracts with the thirty-four Year 9 (i.e., second year high school) students for whom she was responsible. As both parties were inexperienced in the approach, there was an element of chaos, and Kinsella felt an immense strain (Boomer, 1982, p. 65), but a survey at the end of the contract indicated that the students felt that they had learned a great deal, and strongly requested a second chance. Negotiation of the second contract established possible topics, and maximum requirements and conditions of work. Kinsella reported that for both herself and her students, the second contract was a more positive experience.

Reading *Backchat*, the newsletter for secondary school English teachers (Education Department of Western Australia, 1973–83) suggested that there were innovative and negotiated teaching and learning experiences taking place during the late 1970s and early 1980s, but that they were not the norm. Other evidence (Louden, 1982; Reid, 1982; Green and Reid, 1986; O'Neill, 1984 and 1987) indicated that rather than the progressive model of English developing strength throughout the 1980s there was a sense of impending crisis (Green, 1991, pp. 349–50). 'Empowerment' through a syllabus statement is not likely to be realizable in practice if teachers lack the necessary skills, and are constrained by institutional structures and workloads inimicable to negotiated teaching syllabuses.

The crisis referred to above was, according to Green (1991), in part constructed as a literacy and standards debate conducted through reports and seminars in the public newspapers and non-print media, and through government reports. Green detailed the ways in which this public debate was orchestrated to shape negotiations over the English syllabus in restructuring the lower school English curriculum, and attempts to re-shape the senior school syllabus statements. A Professor of Education at the University of Western Australia had been a key member of the Beazley Committee, and subsequently, took a major role on Ministry committees and working parties on literacy and curriculum, and literacy and English. Although an academic, he was not located in English or English education, but came from a background of philosophy and evaluation, and argued strongly for a functional approach to English, listing skills similar to those specified in the College Entrance Examination Board (Scriven, 1984).

Unit Curriculum

Like the Achievement Certificate before it, the Unit Curriculum structure had its genesis in an Education Department sponsored report. The Burke

Labor Government was elected in 1983 without an Education policy. Instead, an enquiry into Education in Western Australia was promised, headed by a prominent ex-federal Labor politician, Kim Beazley. The committee of enquiry consulted widely with community, business and employer groups, whose concerns were allegedly reflected in the prominence given in the Beazley Report to levels of literacy and numeracy.

In enacting the Beazley Report, some elements were negotiable, while others were not. For example, the Ministry of Education accepted the recommendation that the new curriculum structure should be discrete 40 hour units of equal value and significance arranged in strands, rather than the Achievement Certificate structure of core and optional units. The units were to be standardized by their instructional objectives and content, and student achievement was to be measured by both continuous assessment and end-point grade related descriptors. Although tertiary institution departments of education were asked for comment on the proposed structure, criticisms were ignored rather than used to modify the structure. Other matters, such as ways in which the commitment to improving literacy standards were to be incorporated into the curriculum were negotiated. Working parties or consultative committees were established on literacy and curriculum, literacy and English, and assessment of literacy.

Development of the units in each curriculum area was regarded by the Ministry as a matter of re-packaging existing curriculum material, rather than developing new units, and therefore not requiring any negotiation. The redevelopment process was not a straight forward one. In social studies, the central curriculum team had just completed an eight-year project developing a spiralling K–10 curriculum that they were required to cut into discrete 40 hour fragments. In English, there was nothing to cut up; the general aims and objectives of Achievement Certificate English were intended to apply over the three years of lower secondary schooling, and course development was located in the schools. Consequently, English curriculum writers were required to develop 40 hour units across six stages, incorporating the literacy requirements. Development of the units was in-house and took place under severe time constraints, as the Government had made public commitments to have the new unit structure in place in 1986 (and before the next election).

The structure adopted provided for twenty-six units organized in six stages. The first stage was designated focus level for Year 8 (first year high school) students who were identified as low-level competence in English at exit from primary school. Stages 2 to 6 were supposed to represent ascending degrees of difficulty, although all units in the same stage were to be of approximately equal difficulty. Each stage had two general units, normally taken by most students, and a varying number of special interest units, which might or might not be offered by schools. Stage 3 had an additional two focus units intended for students who had performed badly in general units at stages 2 or 3. Students were normally expected to

progress from stage 2 towards stage 6 during the three years of lower secondary schooling, depending on how many English units they undertook and passed.

A forum in which negotiation might have taken place was the Unit Curriculum Review Committee. This committee was set up under the auspices of the SEA, with representatives from the tertiary sector, Catholic and independent schools, and various community representatives. The function of this committee was ostensibly to review all units proposed for implementation against the frames of reference established by the Ministry of Education. Units proposed by schools were reviewed in this way and consultation provided to assist in re-writing to meet the requirements where necessary. Units proposed by the Ministry were also reviewed using the same criteria, but it was apparent quire early in the process that those units which had been centrally developed would not be modified. In the case of English, detailed criticisms (within the frames of reference established by the Ministry) were made of the package by both the Catholic Education Officer, and the University of Western Australia representative (see Minutes of the Unit Curriculum Review Committee). The Ministry representative responsible for handling the English package at this stage took the position that:

- what was proposed was better than what was currently available to schools;
- all of the material had already been printed, and was on pallets ready for distribution;
- if the committee declined to approve the English package, English teachers would have nothing in place for the following year.

Thus, the English package was approved for implementation without any requirement for early review, although units proposed by other agents had been given limited approval for one or two years.

At the implementation phase, negotiation was similarly curtailed. The unit curriculum structure as a whole was trialled in a small number of schools, but implemented for all schools in the following year, i.e., planning and timetabling had to be done before trial and evaluation was compete. No modification of the English units was attempted, although it was found that there were difficulties, even in this minimalist trial.

The orientation of English had been changed in this process without consultation with the English teachers who were to implement the new curriculum. Although the rationale appeared to be reassuringly eclectic and inclusive in tone, the agenda had shifted from a progressive personal growth orientation to a skills-based functional English orientation, demanding, as Green (1989) pointed out 'decisive and significant changes in professional and pedagogic ideology' (p. 27). The shift was most marked in statements about the literacy requirements:

> All of the language abilities included under the term 'literacy' are contained in this Syllabus. Teachers can be confident that in working with the Syllabus process and text objectives they will have attended to all literacy objectives. (Curriculum Branch, March 1987, p. 3)

As Green (1991) notes, the final formulation was more circumspect:

> Teachers will recognize many of the aspects of literacy outlined here as elements of English programs they have taught as one part of the set of objectives for subject English. Teachers can be confident that in working with the syllabus objectives and the syllabus support material they will be attending appropriately to their students' language and literacy development. (Ministry of Education, 1988, p. 14)

The aims of English appeared to draw eclectically from various models of English, leaving space for teachers' current practices and orientations to:

- learn about and share in the language heritage of our culture;
- learn and use the language forms and conventions used in schooling and in the world beyond schooling;
- use language as a medium for learning and for personal growth;
- understand how structures, patterns and audience expectations influence language and meaning.

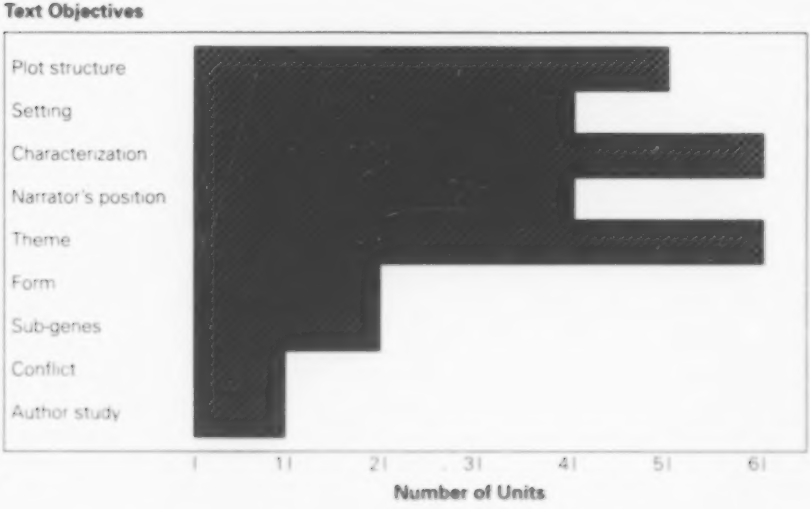
However, the process objectives, described as 'referring to students' long-term language development which is being fostered by their study in English' were a different matter. All units aim to develop students' abilities to:

- use the conventions of standard English in writing;
- prepare and participate in a range of one-to-one, individual and group oral language activities;
- understand, order and convey facts, ideas and opinions in a variety of comprehending and composing activities;
- understand and respond to structure, style and tone and vary language according to audience and purpose;
- understand and use a wide vocabulary.

(Ministry of Education, 1988, p. 4)

Comparison of the process objectives with the aims of English in the unit curriculum, shows that cultural heritage and personal growth elements were dropped, and that functional English skills were promoted as the sole concern. In terms of figure 9.2, syllabus orientation had been shifted from the lower left quadrant of Progressive English to the upper left quadrant of English as Skills.

Figure 9.3: Showing number of units in which prose fiction text objectives recur



It was a basic premise of unit curriculum that the units would be standardized so that any given unit of English taught in one school would provide the same educational experience and the same assessment outcome if it were taught in a different school. Standardization was to be achieved in the unit descriptions by detailed specific objectives and in assessment by grade related descriptors for each unit at five levels (A, B, C, D and F). English units did not have specified teaching and learning activities, or specified resources for each unit (the resource base already established in schools was too diverse, and the new structure was to be implemented without further resource outlay from the Ministry). Each unit of English was to address five text types — transactional, media, prose fiction, poetry and drama — each with a recommended weighting of time to be allocated. Text objectives were set out for each text type in each unit, but these were frequently loose descriptions of content areas, and were repeated in different units. In the case of prose fiction, for example, text objectives in general units (total of ten) were repeated as shown in figure 9.3.

What was to be learned about any of these text areas was often not prescribed in any more detail than in figure 9.3, although teachers were sometimes advised to give 'attention where necessary', or in the case of unit 1152, to choose between the listed items. Prose fiction texts were to comprise between 20–40 per cent of the content of each unit. Without more detailed objectives than those given above, it is difficult to see how the units might differ significantly, other than in the particular titles studied, or indeed, how the same unit would remain constant throughout the

state if teachers were to select their own titles, and plan their own teaching and learning activities around the designated content areas. That is, the criterion of standardization could not be met from the information offered in the unit description.

Grading of student performance for the unit was to be standards (i.e., criterion) referenced, using grade-related descriptors. For general units, these consisted of sets of descriptors for writing, speaking, transactional text, media text, prose fiction and drama texts, and poetry text. Reading did not have separate descriptors identified for it, although teachers were expected to weight writing reading at 60–70 per cent, and speaking listening performing viewing at 30–40 per cent of total assessment. The grade-related descriptors did not provide yardsticks against which to measure student performance, as seen from a typical set shown in table 9.4.

Descriptors for D and F levels were frequently negative statements describing shortcomings in student performance. Other statements were relative — 'generally contributes to discussion in appropriate ways' (Table 9.4, Grade B), or required the teacher to exercise judgment about what might be 'adequate', accurate', appropriate', 'sketchy' performances. Judgments were also required about whether student writing carried 'strong impact for the reader' (A), 'some impact for the reader (B), 'little intentional impact for the reader' (D), or 'negative impact for the reader' (F). Writers performing at C grade in this unit were apparently not required to consider the reader.

Some units did not have their own sets of descriptors at all. Because units at the same stage were supposed to be of equal difficulty, the grade-related descriptors for the general units were to apply to all other units in that stage. This proved a particular problem in stage 3, because in this stage there were focus units designated specifically for students who had failed at the general level of stages 2 and 3 and were supposed to be doing less difficult units. Applying descriptors intended for stage 3 general units would ensure that these students would fail again. Some units (focus level 1121 and 1122) had descriptors for only three grades — A, D, and F. Presumably teachers arrived at grades for B and C by comparing performances of students one to another, rather than to standards which were not described.

What had been promoted as a fully described (if not prescribed) syllabus obviously could not be operated to standardize the teaching and learning experience in English in the lower secondary school. At least three aspects — variation in the resource bases; and lack of specificity in learning objectives; and grade-related descriptors — ensured that this could not happen. What did curtail the freedom of teachers to negotiate the operational curriculum was the amount of work to be accomplished within the specified 40 hours, and the relative weightings of each text type — drama and poetry each to have only 10–25 per cent, while transactional text and prose fiction were each at 20–40 per cent, with media at 15–25

Table 9.4 Grade Related Descriptors for general unit 1122

	A	B	C	D	F
Writing	Composes writing which: • is clear in expression; • regularly obeys most conventions of spelling, punctuation and paragraphing; • shows a variety of sentence types appropriate for the writing task; • is imaginative; • carries a strong impact for the reader.	Composes writing which: • is generally clear in expression; • obeys most conventions of spelling, punctuation and paragraphing with only minor errors; • produces interesting writing; • has some impact for the reader.	Composes writing which: • is sometimes difficult to follow; • regularly shows errors in the many conventions of English usage and sentence structure; • tends to be repetitious and predictable.	Composes writing which: • does not follow a clear line of development; • shows frequent inconsistencies in the conventions of English usage; • has little intentional impact on the reader.	Composes writing which: • shows little sense of direction; • shows random understanding the convention of English usage; • carries a negative impact for the reader.
Speaking	• contributes frequently and sensibly to discussion; • listens with interest to the views of others and makes appropriate responses in a wide range of situations; • speaks fluently, clearly and confidently in most situations.	• generally contributes to discussions in appropriate ways; • listens to the views of other and makes appropriate responses; • generally speaks clearly and fluently in a range of formal and informal situations.	• makes limited and predictable contributions to discussion; • usually listens to the views of others and responds appropriately; • spoken language is reasonably clear but may lack fluency in some situations.	• makes few and sometimes inappropriate contributions to discussion; • listens to the views of others only on matters of immediate interest; • spoken language tends to be hesitant and varies in clarity.	• rarely contributes effectively to discussions; • rarely listens to the views of others; • spoken language is unclear and lacks fluency.
Transactional text objectives	• makes accurate notes based on the organizational features and content of written text.	• makes adequate notes based on the organizational features and major content of a written text.	• makes sketchy notes based on some of the organizational features and content of a written text.	• makes sketchy notes which only randomly reflect the organization and content of a written text.	• makes notes which do not reflect the major content or organization of a written text.
Media text objectives	• identifies and evaluates a range of strategies to target the audience; • applies appropriate and effective strategies, combining technical, written and symbolic codes imaginatively to match the target audience.	• identifies and evaluates the main strategies to target the audience; • applies appropriate strategies and includes some technical, written and symbolic codes to match the target audience.	• identifies main strategies used to target an audience; • applies some strategies which may be appropriate whilst others may be misplaced.	• identifies a limited number of strategies to target an audience; • applies strategies with little awareness of their impact on a specific audience.	• identifies with assistance the most obvious strategies to target an audience but is unable to apply them.

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per cent. Green (1991) citing Sooby's (1985) analysis of the marking load for English teachers in Achievement Certificate English argued that the programming and marking load for English teachers would rise in the Unit Curriculum structure, further limiting their energies for negotiating the syllabus with learners.

Summary

Although development of both lower school syllabuses in English was top–down, and characterized by minimal negotiation with teachers or academics at the developmental stage, it were driven by different agendas. Achievement Certificate English was located in a progressive English orientation informed by theories of language development, learning and pedagogy that insisted on space being available to the classroom teacher to develop courses or teaching programs appropriate to the needs and interests of the learners in their classes. In the late 1970s a groundswell of expectations that the learners would have a part in negotiating their program grew.

A counter movement was a concern that there was little consensus within the teaching profession about what English might be at the operational level, or what might constitute 'growth' in English (O'Neill, 1987; Allen, 1980). The Beazley Report capitalized on this concern, and that expressed by parent and community interviewees, to construct a literacy 'crisis'. The terms of reference for the Unit Curriculum English syllabus working party were intended to produce a detailed, prescriptive, non-negotiable syllabus for functional English.

Although the rationale for the syllabus appeared to be eclectic and open, the process objectives were not. The structure of the units (40 hours) was centrally determined by the unit curriculum committee within the Ministry of Education. The organizing principles and the content of each unit of English were determined by the English working party, but not negotiated with the bulk of teachers who were required to implement the syllabus.

Thus, at the lower secondary school level, negotiation with teachers at the development stage has not been a feature of English syllabus development in Western Australia in the past twenty-five years. However, it appeared that while one syllabus statement was designed to provide teachers with the opportunity to negotiate at school and classroom level, the second was intended to reduce teachers to the function of syllabus technicians (Apple, 1982). That this may not have been the case in practice can be referenced to deficiencies in curriculum development and implementation. Having recognized the limitations of Unit Curriculum, the Ministry of Education began working on Student Outcome Statements (SOS) for each subject, which, in the process of devolution of responsibility to the schools

were required to be incorporated into school development plans as part of the accountability measures.

Current Status

As work towards SOSs proceeded within the Western Australian Ministry of Education, negotiations for a national curriculum began at a quite different level. Under the Australian Constitution, education remains a residual power of the states, but negotiated consensus at the Australian Education Council (AEC), the inter-governmental body consisting of Federal and state education ministers, was used to arrive at a national approach to development of policy for Australian schooling and to bypass the constitutional and financial constraints of Australian federalism. A series of national reports compiled by committees which notably eschewed educators set out employment related competencies (Australian Education Council Review Committee, Finn, 1991), a set of key competency structures (Mayer Committee, 1992) and a national framework for competency-based vocational training (Employment and Skills Formation Council, Carmichael, 1992). Signing of the Hobart Declaration in 1987, articulating a common set of educational goals was part of the negotiation at national level, to be achieved by development of national curricula in eight areas of study. Each package was to consist of a national framework statement, a set of national assessment profiles, and a briefer guide for the community at large.

Curriculum development was tendered out with detailed frames of reference. Two groups, one from the South Australian Education Department, and the other from the Australian Capital Territory, led by Garth Boomer, worked on development of the English materials. The curriculum developers tended to negotiate with State ministries as stakeholders, professional bodies such as Australian Association for the Teaching of English (AATE), 'critical friends' (academics within the field) and 'peak' organizations. The consultation process, although reportedly widespread, appeared to be based on a technique of dividing the contributors. 'Critical friends' were isolated from each other, not knowing who else was being consulted, and receiving no feedback other than the next draft of the statement or profiles. Sometimes, 'critical friends' simply dropped off the distribution list without notice. Perhaps they were too critical?

Teachers were largely excluded from this process of consultative development. Ford, the Federal Minister for Schooling claimed on national television that 2,000 teachers had been consulted; if so, this is a remarkably small sample across eight different national curriculum frameworks and eight states and territories.

The national curriculum package was rejected by the Western Australian Minister for Education (among others) at the AEC conference in

August 1993. In the interim, the Ministry continued development of student outcome statements, including 'mapping' of outcome statements against existing syllabus documents. In English, the worst match between the student outcome statements and existing syllabus documents was at the lower secondary school level; that is, Unit Curriculum. The student outcome statements and the national profiles are substantially similar, and the Ministry (renamed the Education Department of Western Australia) adopted the national assessment profiles for evaluation. Since then, consultation with academics, parent and community groups about the appropriateness of the profiles (referred to as Student Outcome Statements in Western Australia) has been widespread. Throughout 1994 and 1995, trials are being conducted in twelve schools to determine whether the SOSs can be grafted on to the Unit Curriculum structure, and whether teachers can assess student performance competently using the SOSs. During the trial period, Unit Curriculum is to remain in place for non-trial schools. Since 1989, the Education Department (then Ministry) has developed a series of tests, Monitoring Standards in Education (MSE), for English and mathematics. It is possible that the MSE tests could be used to monitor school accountability for student attainment, if the trail period suggests that teachers are unable to operate the SOSs to the satisfaction of the Education Department.

Likely Outcomes?

The trial sample of schools using SOSs is relatively small. The bulk of the teaching population will not be very familiar with the structure and operation of SOS before they use them in 1996 and onwards. As with Unit Curriculum, the syllabus structure will require teachers to change their operational curriculum and their teaching practices without this being made explicit, let alone negotiated. If teachers in the trial schools are unable to operate the SOSs as assessment instruments, the probability is increased that assessment will occur through state-wide testing at Years 3, 7 and 10, and the tests, rather than the outcome statements will become the curriculum framework. As O'Donohue argues, teachers

> are faced with great uncertainties . . . their future role in curriculum decision making is unclear due to the continuing emergence of uncertainties at state level, and also because the debate which is taking place on the possibility of introducing a national curriculum is one that they have been excluded from. (1994, in press)

Whatever else, abandonment of SOS is not a likely outcome of the 1994–95 trials. Neither is a major centrally funded curriculum redevelopment project because of the resource demands that would entail, and the current

position on devolution. In such a situation, teachers are faced with two possible roles in curriculum development and implementation. They may function as technicians, working backwards from the tests and/or outcome statements as curriculum frameworks. Alternatively, they may be expected to function as curriculum developers, working out a school-based curriculum to meet the demands of the outcome statements or testing procedures. It is unlikely that their future role will be the subject of serious negotiation with the Education Department, but will be visited upon them sometime after 1995.

Conclusion

From this review of three curriculum 'reforms' in Western Australia, one would conclude that inclusion of teachers as full partners in curriculum negotiations at the lower secondary school level is not a practice in Western Australia. Decisions to restructure curricula have been taken as part of government policy, or at the uppermost levels of the Education Department or Ministry. Although various other parties, including academics have been involved at times in the curriculum development process, characteristically teachers have not.

In the case of Achievement Certificate English, teachers became curriculum developers, and had the opportunity to negotiate the operational syllabus with their students, almost by default. Criticisms of Achievement Certificate English, in particular have been located in the perceived failures of teachers in their conceptualization of English as a subject area, and their capacity to develop operational curricula that produced student outcomes desired by employers and the community at large. What has been given remarkably little attention is the extent to which teachers were consulted, informed or prepared for their role as school-based curriculum developers, or the extent to which competing orientations to English might predictably have produced conflicting versions of English within the schools, and between schools and their communities.

An announced project of unit curriculum was to remove from teachers their role as curriculum developers, and locate them as teacher technicians, responsible for delivering a pre-packaged curriculum, and hold them accountable for student achievement. The rationale for unit curriculum (English) contains sufficient ambivalence, and the units themselves sufficient holes, to raise doubts about this agenda in the case of English, although as Green (1991) has argued cogently and at length, unit curriculum undoubtedly entailed a substantial shift to the right, and a curtailment of the capacity of English teachers to negotiate anything. Work undertaken by the Western Australian Ministry was seen as a dress rehearsal for national curriculum (Jeffery, 1986; Green, 1989; O'Neill, 1992c). Attempts to reach consensus on a national framework highlighted competing

orientations with the field of English, and conflicts between views of English educators and others. The national curriculum package was perceived as a move to conservatism which would further constrain the professional freedom and judgment of English teachers. A parallel concern was that the national profiles could and would be used to further narrow the scope of the curriculum to what could be tested in a national testing program.

In Western Australia, the current (1994) situation ironically opens a real possibility for negotiation of the curriculum at the school level. This was mooted by O'Neill (1984 and 1987), but was marginalized as an option by the implementation of unit curriculum, which, while it left little opportunity for negotiation by teachers at any stage of development or implementation, failed signally as an accountability or standardization measure. One view current among English consultants in the Department of Education (personal communication) is that it will be possible to have the best of both worlds: accountability imposed by the SOS, as should have been the case with unit curriculum; empowerment of teachers to negotiate the operational curriculum as they could in the Achievement Certificate.

If English teachers were (largely) unable to take advantage of their 'empowerment' in the Achievement Certificate structure, why should they be able to do so in the new situation of devolution, where the workload imposed by school-based decision making, administration and accountability appears to have risen? Key factors in the outcomes of the existing situation will be the extent to which:

- differences in orientations to English are acknowledged and accepted;
- schools and teachers are provided with the professional development and resources to equip them for a major school-based curriculum development function;
- the central Department of Education is willing to accept schools' assessments of the attainment of required student outcomes, as opposed to the extent to which the central authority will seek to monitor it by external testing.

If these factors are not addressed seriously at the next stage, no significant change is likely to occur, either in the quality of educational outcome, or in the capacity of English teachers to negotiate appropriate curriculum experiences for the students in their classrooms.

Chapter 10

Teachers' Early Experiences of the Implementation of the British National Curriculum

Neville Bennett and Clive Carré

Although the movement to national curricula appears to be a significant international trend it is neither new nor novel. Indeed in 1987 the then Secretary of State for Education, Kenneth Baker, compared the British education system unfavorably with those in Europe, arguing that whereas the later had tended to centralize and standardize, Britain had gone for diffusion and variety. This meant that the school curriculum had been largely left to individual schools and teachers. This had to change, he argued, by establishing a national curriculum which works through national criteria for each subject area of the curriculum. The subsequent 1988 Education Act introduced a national curriculum of ten subjects for all maintained schools in England and Wales, heralding fundamental shifts in primary school practice. In this chapter, we report on primary teachers' initial and continuing responses to the implementation of the national curriculum gained through national surveys of perceptions and practice. But first, to provide the necessary context, we consider practice prior to the enactment of the 1988 Act.

Primary Practice before the 1988 Education Reform Act

It is not easy to provide a coherent picture of practice before the Act. Surveys were irregular with limited and unrepresentative samples. Also the focus of such surveys obviously reflected the concerns of their time. In the 1970s these tended to focus on teaching styles, broadly defined, with the aim of ascertaining the extent to which so-called progressive practices were being implemented. These gave way in the 1980s to more detailed accounts of curriculum content and balance grounded in opportunity-to-learn and constructivist theories of learning and teaching. One investigation, for example, observed, in blocks of a whole week, the time that seventy-eight teachers allocated to various curriculum areas and the frequency

Table 10.1: Time spent on different curriculum areas

	Hours per Week	
	Average	*Range*
Mathematics	4.25	2–7
Language	7.5	4–12
Environmental Studies	3.25	0–7.5
Aesthetics	2.5	0–4.3
Physical Education	2.5	0–5
Social/Moral	1.5	0–3
Transition	3.3	2–5

of student involvement on curriculum tasks in a national sample of twenty-three infant and junior open-plan schools. The research (Bennett *et al.*, 1980) reported large variations in the time devoted to the various subjects in the schools observed. Table 10.1 shows the average amount and range of time devoted to curriculum areas in junior schools.

Thus, for example, the average amount of time spent on mathematics in the sample was 4.25 hours per week, but varied from 2 hours in some classrooms to over 7 hours in others. Similarly, the average time spent on language activities (reading, writing, spelling, etc.) was 7.5 hours per week but varied from a low of 4 hours to a high of 12 hours. Although the allocations were somewhat different in infant schools (e.g., more time devoted to language (particularly reading activities), the time variations were as great, and were supported by other studies (Galton *et al.*, 1980). These findings indicated that children can experience quite different curricula depending on the school they happen to attend. Further, variation in curriculum was paralleled by variation in the extent of student involvement or engagement. On average students were involved in their work for about 66 per cent of the time, but this varied markedly from class to class. Class averages varied from a low of 50 per cent to a high of 90 per cent. More recent studies on how time is spent also indicate the tremendous disparities in practice from class to class (Bennett *et al.*, 1984; Bennett and Kell, 1989).

Diversity was also evident in the structure of experiences of children, even in the same content area. In language for example, Bennett *et al.* (1984) concluded:

> There were large differences between classes in terms of what was attempted and what was obtained. These differences do not seem attributable to differences of catchment area or intake. Rather they appear to arise from decisions made by individual class teachers or from the design of school schemes. (p. 128)

Similar differences in provision, but in mathematics, was reported by Tizzard *et al.* (1988) who observed teachers and students in inner-city

schools. They found for example that some teachers introduced written subtraction in Year 1, whereas other teachers had not yet introduced it in Year 3.

There is evidence that lack of central, or even local, control of curriculum, together with a tradition of teacher autonomy, resulted in primary practice being extremely diverse. In other words teachers determined the allocation of curriculum time; the content to fill that time; and the mode of instruction, delivering a different curriculum reflecting their own abilities and expectations.

This picture of diversity is further muddied by the lack of any national testing program, so that there were no clear criteria against which standards or levels of attainment could be judged in any valid way. The only data available on standards were derived from school inspections of Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI). These are based on professional judgments, and doubts have been expressed concerning their reliability and validity. There was no shortage of such reports identifying and criticizing teachers' shortcomings. Taking the teaching of science as an example, one survey of primary schools in England reported that:

> Few primary schools visited in the course of this survey had effective programmes for the teaching of science. There was a lack of appropriate equipment; insufficient attention was given to ensuring proper coverage of key scientific notions; the formulating of hypotheses, experimenting and recording was often superficial. (DES, 1978, p. 58)

HMI also concluded that the most severe obstacle to improving science at this level was that many primary teachers,

> . . . lack a working knowledge of elementary science apppropriate to children of this age. This results in some teachers being so short of confidence in their own abilities that they make no attempt to include science in the curriculum. (*op cit*, p. 62)

The Department of Education similarly asserted that, 'the greatest obstacle to the continued improvement in science in primary schools is that many existing teachers lack a working knowledge of elementary science', and this has been supported more recently in studies of primary teachers understandings of science concepts (e.g., Kruger and Summers; 1989; Summers, Kruger and Palacio, 1993)

From 1978 onwards, the amount of science taught increased, but concerns were still expressed. After an inspection of some 300 schools HMI (DES, 1989) reported that, despite more science being taught, a significant number of schools had 'far to go' to acquire the necessary competences to teach to the national curriculum. Weaknesses perceived

in 1978 still persisted and they cited the lack of planning at whole school level; uncertain assessment of children's attainment; poor matching and a lack of breadth and balance in teachers' work. The survey found many teachers tending, 'to emphasize the acquisition of skills at the expense of scientific knowledge and understanding'.

The importance of teachers' subject knowledge has been recognized increasingly over the last decade, and studies of teachers' knowledge of subjects other than science have presented very similar findings (Bennett and Carré, 1993; McDiarmid, 1990; Ball, 1990). As Kennedy (1991) succinctly put it — 'teachers cannot teach what they do not know'.

Against such a background of diverse practice and unequal opportunity for children it was perhaps inevitable that the Government would intervene. In 1983 the Department of Education and Science (DES) started to talk in terms of an 'entitlement curriculum', defined as a broad framework representing a synthesis of the vocational, the technical and the academic:

> It seemed essential that *all* pupils should be guaranteed a curriculum of distinctive breadth and depth to which they should be *entitled*, irrespective of the type of school they attended or their level of ability or their social circumstances and that failure to provide such a curriculum is unacceptable. (DES, 1983, p. 38)

The schools had been judged and had been found wanting, and in order to address these criticisms, and improve standards, the national curriculum was introduced. The Education Act, the legislation to secure its full implementation, became law in July 1988.

The National Curriculum

The 1988 Education Act broke the tradition in Britain of localism, whereby heads and teachers exercised a high degree of local control over what was taught, by defining the main structure of the curriculum (Golby, 1988). Three core subjects were identified: English, maths and science, i.e., prioritizing 'the basics'; and six 'foundation' subjects: art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Religious education was still to be taught as a legal requirement under the 1944 Education Act.

The design of the national curriculum was conceived in four 'key stages', Key Stage 1 (5–7 years) and Key Stage 2 (7–11 years) cover the primary curriculum. Ten performance levels for each subject are intended to cover the full range of progression from 5–16 years of age, and any one level represents a particular competence regardless of the age of the child. Children who leave primary school at age 11 are expected to reach performance levels from 2 through to 6. The national curriculum defines

legally binding 'programmes of study', clear statements of subject matter to be taught, to assist teachers in planning and to enable children to meet performance levels. Although the content is defined, teachers are free to choose teaching methods and texts, to work thematically or to teach topics as discrete units. A system of standardized national attainment tasks (SATs) assess the curriculum, in association with teacher assessments (TAs). (Caroline Gipps, in her chapter in Volume One of this companion set, deals with the issues surrounding these and more recent developments in the politics of assessment in the national curriculum context.)

The situation that primary teachers thus found themselves in was that a centralized curriculum, which they had played no part in developing, was to be imposed on them, which incorporated an ideology to which many did not subscribe, subject knowledge which many did not hold, and a formal assessment system in which many did not believe. Such dramatic changes and challenges to teachers' existing practices and routines could, according to 'concerns theory' (Hall and Loucks, 1977) lead to an undermining of teachers' confidence and feelings of self-efficacy. It was important therefore, both for practitioners and policy makers, to acquire a clear understanding of teachers' attitudes towards, and their confidence in, adequately delivering the new curriculum. Consequently two surveys were carried out, one in 1989 and another in 1991, as part of the Leverhulme Primary Project at the University of Exeter.

The Leverhulme Primary Surveys

The 1989 national survey achieved data from a representative sample of 901 primary teachers. It provided information in the following domains: teachers' self-perceived competence to teach the content in the ten subjects; any constraints that might affect their ability to teach the national curriculum; the professional skills they found difficult or easy; their attitude to teaching approaches; and priorities for their inservice training (Wragg *et al.*, 1989).

A major part of the questionnaire concerned teachers' perceived competence to teach the content (set out in the form of learning intentions or assessment objectives called 'statements of attainment') of the new curriculum. A selection of statements of attainment was made from English, mathematics and science covering the primary age range i.e., levels 1 to 6 in the national curriculum jargon. Teachers recorded their perceived competence to teach such items as 'understand how living things are looked after' (level 2, science); 'explain the water cycle' (level 5, science); 'select and use appropriate reference books' (level 3, English); 'produce clear and legible handwriting in both printed and cursive styles' (level 5, English); 'use addition and subtraction with numbers up to 10' (level 1, mathematics), and 'use index notation to express powers of whole numbers' (level 5,

mathematics). In all, 13 English, 17 science and 12 mathematics statements of attainment were chosen. In addition, statements were constructed for information technology, (e.g., 'use a word processor to redraft and revise text') and music (e.g., 'learn a new song' and 'imitate and recall simple rhythmic patterns.') Participating teachers were asked to use a four point scale to indicate their overall expression of perceived self-competence, as follows:

1 I feel I am competent with my existing knowledge and skills.
2 I feel competent with a little help from colleagues.
3 I feel relatively competent but need inservice and help from colleagues.
4 I feel I am not competent and need substantial inservice support.

Teachers, irrespective of their age, sex, the age of the children they taught or the size of their school, saw themselves as most competent in English with mathematics in second place. They felt least competent in science, music and design technology. In each of these subjects, their reactions to the individual statements of attainment confirmed their anxiety about their existing level of competence. In science, for example, for most of the statements fewer than half the teachers in the sample felt competent with their existing knowledge. In music and information technology, over half the teachers perceived a need for additional help. In music, only a quarter felt competent with their existing knowledge and only one in seven in technology.

In general teachers were not opposed to the national curriculum, but there were numerous references to the short timescale in which it had been introduced. They also expressed fears about shortage of resources and anxiety about assessment procedures. The personal strain that many felt, especially head teachers, was evident in their responses. For example, one said:

> In principle it would appear the national curriculum has a lot to offer. However, with the extra demands of record keeping, possibly testing and marking, it makes me wonder if we will have time enough to teach.

A follow-up survey was conducted in 1991, with a sample size of 433 teachers in 131 schools (Bennett, Wragg, Carré and Carter, 1992). The characteristics of the schools which responded to the 1991 survey were very similar to those in 1989, indeed 223 of the 433 teachers were common to both surveys. This commonality gave confidence in the accuracy of the comparisons. A major interest in the 1991 survey was to ascertain whether teachers had changed their perceptions of their own subject matter knowledge, and their felt competences to teach the national curriculum in the manner and form intended by the designers.

Table 10.2: Rank comparison of teachers' feelings of competence (%) in initial (1989) and follow-up survey (1991)

Initial survey 1989			Follow-up survey 1991		
Rank	*Subject*	*%*	*Rank*	*Subject*	*%*
1	English	81	1	English	77
2	Mathematics	68	2	Mathematics	62
3	History	54	3	Science	41
4	Geography	48	4	Art	40
5	Art	48	5	History	38
6	PE	47	6	PE	37
7	RE	45	7	Geography	36
8	Science	34	8	RE	33
9	Music	27	9	Music	23
10	Technology	14	10	Technology	14

An additional section on inservice support was included. The original survey had shown an urgent need for inservice support (Wragg *et al.*, 1989; Carré and Carter, 1990), and more data were needed on what was actually on offer, what had been done between 1989 and 1991 and, how useful in-service training had been in supporting teachers in the assessment process.

A new and explicit section was introduced for teachers of 5 to 7 year-olds, who, at the time were involved in the first formal assessment process. It included questions on the support received regarding both teacher assessment and the national assessment tasks. This was in addition to their estimates of the usefulness of the support they may have had in order to meet the formal assessment requirements of the national curriculum.

As in the initial survey, the majority of questions asked teachers to record, in one of the four categories described earlier, how competent they felt with their existing subject knowledge to teach each of the nine subjects of the national curriculum as well as religious education. Table 10.2 shows a comparison of the results of the 1989 and 1991 surveys and shows the rank orders of subjects based on the percentage of teachers responding to category 1 ('competent with existing knowledge and skills') for each subject for the 1991 and 1989 surveys.

As the table shows, most teachers perceive themselves as fully competent in English (77 per cent) and mathematics (62 per cent). However, particularly noteworthy is that, whereas science was ranked eighth out of 10 in 1989, it was ranked third in 1991. Although the rank order changed significantly, however, the proportion of teachers feeling competent did not (i.e., 34 per cent in 1989 and 41 per cent in 1991). What had happened is that just prior to the second survey teachers had been informed of the content to be taught in the geography and history curriculum. This had caused considerable concern which is reflected in the fall in rank order of these subjects and in the levels of felt competence — a fall from 54 per cent to 38 per cent for history and from 48 per cent to 36 per

Table 10.3 Comparison of main inservice needs given by teachers (%)

Initial Survey (1989)	**%**	**Follow-up Survey (1991)**	**%**
Assessment and Testing	55	Computer/Database/IT	43
Science	37	Assessment/Recording	16
Information Technology	30	Science/Maths/Env study	25
Design and Technology	28	Art/Craft/Technology	22
Humanities	14	Music/PE/Drama	15
Maths	10	RE/History/Humanities	
Music	7	Geography Languages	40

cent for geography. There was no change in the low level of teachers who felt competence in technology and music in the two-year intervening period.

Table 10.3 sets out the teachers' inservice priorities, and shows that only 25 per cent now see mathematics and science as a priority area for inservice compared to 40 per cent citing the arts and humanities. Thus it would seem that the allocation of resources, both human and material, to science teaching, together with the provisions set out in statutory orders, could have been of benefit in enhancing teachers' self-perceptions of their competence to teach national curriculum science.

Assessment

At the time of the 1991 survey, teachers of 7 year-olds were involved in the first phase of national testing. Given the potential importance of this process in the manageability of the national curriculum, items were included in the questionnaire on their perceptions on the quality of inservice preparation, the effects of the Teacher Assessments (TAs) and the administration of the national Standard Attainment Tasks (SATs) on themselves and their children, and on the time to plan, assess and record.

The quality of inservice support varied considerably although four out of every five teachers managed to attend appropriate courses. Of more importance was the disruption caused by both TAs and SATs. Both substantially reduced time for normal class work, affected classroom organization and, for nearly 90 per cent of teachers, generated extra stress. Most felt that the experience had done little to enhance their professional competence even if there had been some gain in providing additional information about their students' levels of attainment. Ironically, whilst the teachers were experiencing stress and management overloads the students generally enjoyed the experience. However, the data showed clearly that over-optimistic estimates of the time required to administer national assessment procedures were given to teachers ahead of the event. In reality it took between five and six weeks, double that envisaged by the test agency. Not surprisingly over two-thirds of teachers wished to see the national SATs abolished altogether or substantially reduced in size.

Summary

The general picture to emerge from these two surveys is one of accommodation to meet the requirements of the national curriculum. The initial stages of implementation were underpinned by legislative action in order to put in place and hold teachers accountable for a curriculum that they had no part in designing, as well as new administrative structures that again were centrally imposed, thus tending to preclude any sense of 'ownership'. Meeting the requirements of such a large-scale curricular implementation on a highly compressed timescale generally produced increased workloads accompanied by increased stress, a finding supported by the survey of Campbell *et al.* (1991).

With regard to teachers' felt competence in their subject knowledge, the trend in both English and mathematics was downward. It could be inferred that teachers who perceived themselves as competent in 1989 were later able to appraise their capabilities more accurately, with deeper understanding of the statements of attainment. In science, a somewhat different picture emerged from that in 1989. Then, teachers recorded relatively low estimates of competence across the majority of the statements of attainment and science was ranked 8 out of 10 in perceived competence. In 1991, science had moved to third place. Within the subject, teachers' estimates of their competence substantially increased on most statements of attainment; such that for 11 out of the 17 statements of attainment more than 50 per cent of teachers expressed feelings of competence. In particular, teachers' self-ratings in those statements concerning science process skills showed a significant increase. Delineation of the subject boundaries, and the experience gained with being formally required to allocate appropriate time to teaching the subject are all likely to have contributed to this improved picture. The nett result is that primary science appears to have benefited greatly from the introduction of the national curriculum.

The obverse appears to be the case in history and geography. Formerly teachers enjoyed much latitude in teaching these subjects but the introduction of new programmes of study seemed to have exposed many teachers to different ways of approaching the subject matter, and to changes in the subject matter to be covered. The need for teacher support here is reflected in the high priority that arts and humanities received for inservice work — even though a substantial number of primary teachers come from these specialist backgrounds. There would thus seem to be a convincing case for a heavy investment in time and resources to meet the inservice priorities of primary teachers.

The findings on assessment indicated considerable disruption to school and classroom routines. In 1991 such disruptions occurred from January to May, representing a substantial part of the school year. These disturbances, together with the associated pressures on time and workload,

highlighted the need to reappraise the extent and resourcing of the assessment exercise in the light of the supposed benefits which may accrue.

Discussion

Some commentators have differentiated between *intended policy* — as represented by the original rationale and underlying ideology; *actual policy* — represented by the accompanying documents, texts and content; and *policy in use* — the actual institutional practices. These surveys concentrated on the latter aspect of policy in order to gain the perspective of those who had to enact a policy which was none of their making. Our purpose here is to attempt to explain teachers' reactions and also to ascertain the impact and implications of the surveys themselves.

The general processes of planned change, in which an individual's predictable and personal response to implementation can, as we indicated earlier, be described and explained through 'concerns theory' (Hall and Loucks, 1977). Hall and his colleagues identified the initial concerns of teachers when implementing innovations, and the development progression of these, in an invariant sequence from initial awareness to personal, management, consequence and collaborative concerns as implementation proceeds. Ultimately, 'refocusing' occurs as teachers gain confidence in the innovation in use. This progression has been validated across cultures and over time (Carter, 1986; Carter and Hacker, 1988, Carter and Sanders, 1992). Defining characteristics of the salient features of the Stages of Concern, according to Hord *et al.* (1987), are as follows:

0	*Awareness*	Individual has little concern about, or involvement in, the innovation.
1	*Informational*	Individual has a general awareness of the innovation.
2	*Personal*	Individual is uncertain about the demands of the innovation and their adequacy to meet those demands.
3	*Management*	Individual focuses upon efficiency, organizing, managing demands.
4	*Consequence*	Individual focuses upon impact of the innovation and on the students.
5	*Collaboration*	Individual coordinates and collaborates with others in using the innovation.
6	*Refocusing*	Individual explores possibility of major changes and alternatives.

Viewed in the light of this framework it is clear that teacher concerns vary across different aspects of national curriculum implementation. In terms of perceived competence in subject knowledge, the improvements in science,

for example, seem to reflect a move away from informational and personal concerns towards management and consequence oriented concerns. On the other hand, their uncertainties in history and geography are indicative of high personal concerns, as indeed are their concerns about assessment.

The concerns expressed by primary teachers through this and other similar surveys have successfully allowed political pressure to be brought to bear on the implementation process. Demands for a reduction in curriculum and assessment overload resulted in the so-called *Dearing Review* (1994) which, at the time of writing, had presented proposals for a substantial slimming of the content to be taught and for associated assessment arrangements. These proposals are currently in the consultative process. It is also worth recording that the majority of the members of the committees charged with this streamlining process have been teachers, in total contrast to the committees which designed the original national curriculum.

The issue of teachers' subject knowledge still remains however. An increasing number of research studies have shown the importance of subject knowledge in all aspects of teaching (Bennett and Carré, 1993; Bennett *et al.*, 1994). Alexander *et al.*, (1992) summarized these findings as follows:

> Teachers must possess the subject knowledge which the statutory orders require. Without such knowledge planning will be restricted in scope, the teaching techniques and organisational strategies employed by the teacher will lack purpose and there will be little progression in pupils' learning. (p. 30)

Missing from this conclusion is the crucial role of subject knowledge in the assessment of children. However trite it may sound, teachers are obviously better able to assess, diagnose and understand errors if their own knowledge of a topic is beyond that of the children they teach.

Implications

The evidence concerning teachers' subject knowledge suggests important implications for training at both pre and inservice levels. Current government policy on pre-service training is to insist that a greater proportion of a student-teacher's time should be spent in schools. This accords with current theories of the 'situated' nature of knowledge (Brown, Collins and Duguid, 1989) which suggests that training environments need to be as similar as possible to the environment in which the knowledge and skills are to be used. This, in part, provides a rationale for more training time to be classroom based. A further rationale for school-based training arises out of models of teaching as craft; an important requirement of student teachers being to acquire 'practical knowledge'. The seminal work of Elbaz

(1981 and 1983) described this practical knowledge in terms of what to do, routines of how to do it and elements of a teacher's feelings and values. These, she argued, organized a teacher's cognitive style and methods of presentation. Similarly, Brown and McIntyre (1992) have described how student teachers acquire the craft knowledge of experienced teachers.

While such shifts in the context and focus of initial training may lead to improvements in some aspects of teaching, others could be seriously neglected. If the current state of teachers' subject knowledge is as limited as the research implies, then this is likely to have an effect on the efficacy of school-based training. The focus in schools is more likely to be on providing tips for teaching based on limited understanding of subject content, and is unlikely to develop for student-teachers the necessary pedagogic content knowledge.

The way forward may be to work towards a system whereby higher education institutions provide courses in subject knowledge, and work in close liaison with schools which would be responsible for their part of craft training. However, if subject knowledge were to be incorporated into one year post-graduate courses, for example, which are already believed to be too short to provide a reasonable training, which aspects of curriculum and pedagogy would be dropped or postponed? The problems are not parochial. Kennedy (1991) argues for revising our perceptions:

> . . . so that we redefine our task not as solving a particular problem of teacher knowledge, but rather as managing a particular dilemma . . . If we view teacher knowledge as a dilemma that must be managed, we do not pretend that there are handy solutions . . . (p. 283)

Kennedy believes that teachers should develop their knowledge, both pedagogic and content, over time to evolve understandings about learners, subject and classrooms. Stemming from this approach training as a continuous process is a view supported by Her Majesty's Inspectorate. Initial training is increasingly seen as only a preparation for the early years of teaching, a foundation on which subsequent training and development can build. However, this notion of continuous teacher learning requires an understanding of the requirements of initial training, induction and inservice provision, and 'a formal obligation laid on those responsible for each to deliver their part of the training process' (Alexander *et al.*, 1992).

Inservice teacher education is essential if there is to be an impact in the shorter term. But questions here arise as to the kind of training that will be fruitful and worth investing in. Many courses seem to be too ambitious in scope and there is a lack of awareness of how difficult it is in a short period of time to develop understandings of new concepts. Smith and Neale (1989) report on the difficulty teachers experienced on an inservice course developing their understanding of concepts in science, ideas about

light. The course was focused, and given time and opportunity to construct their own knowledge, the teachers were able, at a later date to facilitate changes in their classrooms. One important message emanating from this research is that subject matter for teaching cannot be taken for granted when planning inservice courses; teachers need both conceptual understanding and pedagogical knowledge and skills.

Although it is questionable to separate teachers' knowledge of subjects and their beliefs about those subjects, for the distinction is by no means clear, there is a growing awareness that teachers' beliefs about subjects and about learning shape the way teachers teach. Grossman *et al.* (1989) and Ball (1990) both report that what student-teachers need are opportunities to identify their beliefs and acknowledge their influence on how they think about teaching, the way content and tasks are chosen and the methods by which concepts are represented. This is an area which merits explicit attention in inservice courses, for the focus on what happens in the classroom shifts from the 'approach', to the underlying orientations towards knowledge. The shift is significant for primary teachers. Beyond expectations made upon them as effective deliverers of subjects which in part may be totally new to them, for many a deeper concern was the statutory endorsement of 'subjects' in primary education. Carré (forthcoming) raises questions about 'what should be taught', for teachers have to resolve dilemmas about their orientations towards knowledge; subject matter that does not necessarily fit clearly into separate compartments. Causes for a reluctance to view subjects as discrete, as happens in secondary school, can be related to an ideology of 'child-centredness', to integrated methods of teaching and to the introduction of new subject matter in the national curriculum.

Evidence also suggests that teachers need continuing help after attending inservice courses — help which will enable them, for example, to validate their knowledge when they come to plan work for children or after they have taught material and need debriefing. In Britain this kind of ongoing support (e.g., through the use of advisory teachers servicing a number of schools) has been reduced considerably in recent years, despite evidence of its value. Ways thus need to be found of providing valuable external professional support of this kind.

The notion of continuous teacher learning suggests the need for a baseline from which to work and towards which to aim. Work has already begun on the development of broad-based core teaching competencies providing teachers with a competency profile achieved on exit from initial training (Dunne and Harvard, 1993). Further research needs to be carried out developing such profiles to delineate which aspects might be targeted at each phase of training and to inform the design and implementation of training courses.

The issue of subject knowledge needs careful consideration within competency-based models of training. Given the national curriculum, is it

feasible or desirable to try to train primary teachers for all 10 subjects? If the evidence already discussed with respect to science extends to other subjects, then perhaps the generalist model of the primary school teacher does need to be examined carefully for tenability within the current curriculum. The development of individual teachers' subject competencies may need to be linked with school development planning and a clearer consideration of what inservice is needed for members of staff in relation to staff subject expertise as a whole. Differentiated courses for teachers with different levels of knowledge may be one solution, but this presents difficulties over targeting and funding. Teacher educators must address the same issues and develop and implement more flexible programs to allow, for example, self-diagnosis and evaluation of subject knowledge and independent learning units addressing the knowledge required for teaching different levels and areas of the curriculum.

Another approach might be to identify the concepts within the primary curriculum that teachers need to understand, i.e., the substantive content knowledge required, together with an analysis and specification of the level of understanding to be achieved. It would also be necessary to identify appropriate pedagogical content knowledge in relation to the particular ideas and concepts to be taught. At primary level, there appears to be relatively little research evidence to inform practice. Key questions thus arise of how pedagogical content knowledge is to be generated and disseminated.

The implementation of the national curriculum has also led to a consideration of specialist versus non-specialist teaching. Although the advantages of students being taught by teachers with sound subject knowledge may outweigh the disadvantages, the actual implementation of such a solution needs examining. Apart from the challenge posed to the prevailing culture of primary schools, difficulties in staffing such an approach operate at two levels: first, whether or not the profession can attract specialists, particularly in the sciences; second, whether the sizes of primary schools make it possible to staff them in ways which enable the curriculum to be adequately covered. An alternative is to enable teachers with subject specialisms to work alongside colleagues. This has the potential for non-specialist teachers to have their pedagogic content knowledge extended, and be enacted within a school based inservice program.

Nevertheless, any moves towards more subject-based teaching are likely to be long term. In the short term, teachers' insecure knowledge, particularly in science, makes likely their continued reliance upon commercial materials to implement the curriculum. A major concern is that teachers use such texts indiscriminately. It is reported, albeit at secondary level (Hashweh, 1987), that whereas the more knowledgable teachers were confident enough to reorganize science texts to suit their own needs, those teachers with less knowledge followed the text more closely and deleted sections that they did not understand. They maintained their own errors

about the content (as their representations in class showed) even when the textbook contradicted them. It is clear that without understanding science concepts, teachers are unable to diagnose the accuracy or adequacy of the content knowledge presented in textbooks. There is thus a burden on publishers to produce textbooks which are not only educationally valid, but contain the most useful forms of representations of concepts.

It is not easy to be optimistic in the prevailing climate about the future support teachers and schools will receive for developing the knowledge bases necessary for high quality teaching of the national curriculum. A number of suggestions for ways forward have been made above, but recent developments may militate against these. So for example, it seems likely that in Britain the length of four year teacher training courses will be cut to three years, putting even greater strain on student-teachers' acquisition of the necessary knowledge bases for teaching. Neither is it possible to foresee improvements in the quality of induction, or inservice courses. Indeed many schools in Britain appear unable to fund any but the shortest inservice courses available, which, by their very length and nature, are unlikely to affect practice significantly. Thus the notion of continuous professional development, although acceptable in theory, is likely to be emaciated in practice.

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Case Studies in Educational Change:
An International Perspective

Edited by
David S. G. Carter and Marnie H. O'Neill

This is the second of a two-volume set offering a series of studies of educational change organized around the three themes: systemic change; from policy to practice; and curriculum contexts. The cases presented in this volume are designed to capture the experience of educational change in specific settings, to contemplate it and portray it in its cross-culture complexity from different contexts and different points of view.

These cases are drawn from a period in which political intervention and attempts to control the curriculum are more overt than they have been before. The contributors document government attempts to reform education by legislation, and to harness education to national productivity in manpowering approaches to curriculum. With one or two exceptions, common features of the cases appear to be marginalization of professional educators, corporatization of education systems, instrumentalization of curriculum, and a wilful disregard of anything that might have been learned about education in the last thirty years. In spite of the diversity of origin and approach of the studies, they show common elements of the change process at work, which can be predicted and, once recognized and understood, can be directed and managed more productively.

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